



Theatre Project Award 2025 Round 2

For activities commencing on or after 1 July–31 December 2025

Guidelines for Applicants

Deadline: 5.30 pm (Ireland time), Thursday 21 November 2024

Applicants with disabilities

The Arts Council makes every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities to engage with our services.

If you have a disability and need help with submitting your application, please contact us as early as possible before the deadline.

Contact: Disability Access Officer

Phone: 01 618 0200 or 01 618 0243

Email: access@artscouncil.ie

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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 video guide to making an application on YouTube, go to

<https://youtu.be/-a3xeZdZj3o?feature=shared>

Key points to remember

- 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 submit 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:

-
- I have read and understand these guidelines.
 - If I have had an issue, I have contacted the Arts Council for assistance well in advance of the deadline
 - I have filled in all 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.
-

1. About the Theatre Project Award

1.1 Objectives and priorities of the award

The objective of the Theatre Project Award (strands 1 and 2) is to support the development, generation and creation of theatre for general audiences. The award is open to professional artists and organisations with a demonstrable track record in theatre practice, in collaboration with artists and/or in partnership with existing theatre organisations, arts centres or festivals, where that partnership is additional to, and separate from, that organisation's core activity.

Note: the priority of the Theatre Project Awards is to provide paid opportunities to freelance theatre-makers, creative producers, playwrights, directors, designers and other theatre artists.

These objectives and priorities will inform shortlisting, scoring and decision-making at all stages of the process. All awards are informed by 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/>).

Definitions for the purpose of this scheme

Theatre:

The Arts Council's definition of Theatre is dramatic or post-dramatic work performed in person by actors in front of a live audience in the same space or location. This may or may not be a formal theatre space.

It should include the essential elements of theatre, such as:

- Performance
- Narrative momentum
- Dramatic tension

This does not mean there must be a discernible story.

However, the work must adhere to the broad structures of what is generally understood to be live theatre.

This definition specifically excludes proposals to develop:

- Audio-drama/radio plays
- The recording of podcasts
- Performance art or durational live art
- Art installations
- Stand-up comedy

- Events such as public interviews, talks, lectures that are not linked and intrinsic to the theatrical work itself. This is in a pre-show or post-show context.
- Any type of filmed/videoed performance. There are some exceptions:
 - Recording a performance in front of a live audience for live broadcast or future dissemination
 - Where public-health guidance prohibits audiences from attending live events

Please note also that we will not prioritise funding for theatre events where:

- The primary artform is not theatre – e.g. dance, music
- The main performers are not theatre practitioners – e.g. dancers, musicians
- The primary focus of the work is participatory practice.

If your event has these elements, apply for awards from the relevant artform team instead.

Theatre artists who propose work **aimed at or involving children or young people** may want to apply to project Awards under Young People, Children and Education (YPCE) when available.

Further information available on www.artscouncil.ie.

<p>Professional theatre artist:</p>	<p>An individual working professionally in a creative capacity within a theatre context – e.g. playwright, theatre-maker, director, actor, designer (incl. lighting, sound, set, costume) and/or creative producer). While they might not earn income continuously or exclusively from their arts practice, applicants must identify themselves, and be recognised by their peers, as professional practising artists</p>
<p>Mentorship:</p>	<p>One-on-one, regular, bespoke and structured support from an experienced artist or professional at a more advanced stage in their theatre practice or professional career than the applicant. There should be strong potential to benefit and advance the applicant’s work or approach.</p>

Mentor:	An experienced individual practitioner who has a demonstrable track record as an expert in their field of theatre practice and whose ability to mentor is clearly defined and articulated.
Collaboration or collaborative process:	A process where theatre artists from different areas of practice (e.g. actors, designers) bring expertise in different types of artistic practices and disciplines to work jointly towards the creation of a piece of theatre work. While there may be a leader or nominated facilitator for this process, this is distinct from the more standard process of a collaboration.
Dramaturgical support:	Focused dramaturgical engagement with the writer and the text over an extended period of development. This may include a dramaturg or a director or other experienced professional with the relevant skills.
Dramaturgical input:	Feedback on a script or a proposal by an experienced artist (e.g. a senior playwright). This may be once-off or repeated, but not extended, engagement, as with dramaturgical support. This may include a dramaturg or a director or other experienced professional with the relevant skills.

The Theatre Project Award is offered across four strands, as follows:

Strand 1: Play Development

The objective of the Play Development strand is to enable the development of a new play or text for performance, in which the playwright is central to the creative process. This could be an application by the playwright themselves or an application by a third party who proposes to commission and support the development of the new play text for performance.

The strand is open for a playwright to apply for time to write/develop a play on their own.

While the emphasis is on the development of the text by the playwright, the process **may also** provide for collaboration from any number of artists or practitioners (e.g. director, dramaturg, designer, actor, performer), including

the person responsible for overseeing the play or performance-text's development.

Funding may be used to remunerate the playwright for time spent on writing the text and, where relevant, for remuneration of collaborators. While presentation of the resulting work to an audience is not a requirement for this strand, applicants may use funding to cover costs associated with rehearsal space and presentation of a work in progress to an invited audience. As with Strand [2](#), presentations to a general audience are not permitted under this strand.

The outcome of the process will be a script for performance.

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Seek to write a new play or text for performance
and
- Can demonstrate excellence, innovation and/or experimentation
and/or
- Work in collaboration with more than one creative artist as part of the play-development process
and/or
- Seek to develop new and innovative concepts for productions of new dramatic material
and
- Can demonstrate their feasibility by providing evidence of:
 - Realistic timelines and budgets
 - Appropriate pay for all artists, including collaborators where relevant to your proposal
 - Financial and/or in-kind supports from other sources where relevant to your proposal.

Please note that the presentation of work to a general or paying audience is not permitted under this strand.

Strand 2: Theatre Creation

The objective of the Theatre Creation strand is to enable the devising of ideas for new work in a collaborative and interdisciplinary context where the playwright may or may not be the centre of the process. The emphasis of the award is on innovation and experimentation. The concept behind a proposal can be non-text-based or based on a piece of new writing for the theatre, a pre-existing dramatic text, an adaptation from another literary form, or a translation or adaptation of a text from another language. The objective of the award is to enable the development of ideas over time through collaboration without the requirement to present to audiences.

While presentation of the resulting work to an audience is not a requirement for this strand, applicants may use funding to covers costs associated with rehearsal space and presentation of a work in progress to an invited audience. As with Strand 1, presentations to a general audience are not permitted under this strand.

The outcome of the process will be a script/performance book.

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Seek to break new ground through innovation and experimentation
and/or
- Seek to develop new forms of theatre through the collaboration of more than one creative artist, which is distinct from, and additional to, the usual collaboration between a lead artist (usually a writer or director) and performers in a rehearsal room
and/or
- Demonstrate ambition and excellence in the quality of dramaturgical support and/or collaboration proposed
and/or
- Seek to develop new and innovative concepts for productions of pre-existing dramatic material
and
- Can demonstrate their feasibility by providing evidence of:
 - Realistic timelines and budgets

- Appropriate pay for all artists including collaborators
- Financial and/or in-kind supports from other sources where relevant to your proposal.

Please note that the presentation of work to a general or paying audience is not permitted under this strand.

1.2 Who can apply?

The award is open to professional artists and organisations working in theatre.

To be eligible to apply, applicants **must**:

- Be resident in the Republic of Ireland. However, we may accept applications from outside the Republic of Ireland. In this case, you must detail in your application form how your proposal would benefit the arts in the Republic of Ireland. We would need to be satisfied with your explanation.

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
- Membership of the Traveller community
- 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 is the applicant?

The applicant is the person or organisation that will receive any grant offered and that will be required to accept the terms and conditions of that grant.

Any grant offered will only be paid into a bank account held in the name of the applicant.

All documentation provided **must** be in the name of the applicant (individual artist or arts organisation) – e.g. if you apply to the Arts Council for funding under the name Máire de Barra, then all documentation, including bank and tax details, must be in that name; variations such as Mary Barry or Barry Studios are not acceptable.

Full-time employees of organisations funded through Strategic/Arts Centre/Arts Grant/Partnership Funding are eligible to apply and/or to be part of an application.

Such individuals may apply or be part of an application once the activities for which they are seeking funding are not:

- Usually undertaken by their employer
- Financially beneficial to their employer
- A conflict of interest with their employer.

In the event they are successful, they will be required to **submit evidence of this in the form of a signed letter on headed paper from their employer. This may be the chief executive or the chair of the board, as appropriate.**

1.4 Who cannot apply?

Applicants who cannot apply include the following:

- Organisations currently in receipt of funding under the following Arts Council programmes: Strategic Funding, Arts Centre Funding, Partnership Funding – though the involvement of such organisations as partners is welcome
- Organisations or individuals that have been awarded 2025 Arts Grant Funding¹
- Members of the Council of National Cultural Institutions directly funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media
- Individuals or organisations that do not have a demonstrable track record as professional artists or organisations

¹ Unsuccessful applicants to AGF 2025 are eligible to apply to this round of Theatre Projects.

- Individuals currently in undergraduate education (including those undertaking foundation courses) or who will be during the period for which this award is offered
- Individuals seeking support towards fees for postgraduate (including unaccredited)/higher education or study

Note: theatre artists wishing to make work primarily aimed at children should also refer to the YPCE Project Award, which may be more suitable. Please seek advice from the Young People, Children and Education (YPCE) Team.

1.5 What may you apply for?

The strand you apply under should match your proposal type as described above and be commensurate with the scale of your proposal. There are four bands of funding available. The amount denotes the maximum you can request under each strand – there is no minimum.

	Amount available*
Strand 1: Play Development	Up to €15,000
Strand 2: Theatre Creation	Up to €26,000

You may apply for support under only **one** strand of the award. You **must** clearly identify which strand you are applying for in section 1.3 of the application form.

In addition to the upper limits stated above, you can apply for [disability access costs](#). If you wish to apply for additional funding on this basis, you should provide information with your application outlining these additional costs.

How much funding should you apply for?

In applying for Theatre Project Award funding, you are required to submit a detailed budget ensuring that all costs and supports in kind and income are listed. The Arts Council supplies a Theatre Budget Template that you **must** use for this purpose – you may download this from the [Theatre Project Award page](#) of the Arts Council website. It may be that the use of this template does not require a great deal of detail; nevertheless, for clarity and consistency this template must be used. Applications that do not provide budget information in the required template will be deemed **ineligible**.

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

- Proposed expenditure should include all fees,* wages, technical costs, promotion and publicity costs, administrative costs, etc.
- Proposed income should include what you expect to receive from other funders, etc.

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.

<p>* Note on artists' pay</p>	<p>The Arts Council is committed to improving the pay and conditions of artists. We have published a <u>policy</u> 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 and appropriate pay and conditions for the artists that you work with. This will help us assess the feasibility of your application.</p>
<p>** Note on in-kind support</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Time contributed by directors or board members may not be included as an in-kind cost.</p>

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

- In the detailed budget template that you must 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 on all three; and make sure that the amount requested equals TOTAL EXPENDITURE minus TOTAL INCOME.

Access costs for artists or participants² with disabilities

² The Arts Council defines participants as those who express themselves creatively by taking part in artistic activities.

The Arts Council is committed to making our funding programmes and the work we fund accessible to everyone.

The Arts Council takes the description of disability from Article 1 of 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.’

You can include disability access costs within your application and there are two types that you can apply for.

1. Participants or personal disability access costs

These costs should remove barriers for artists or participants with disabilities who are delivering your proposal. For example:

- You
- The main artists, individuals, groups, or organisations involved in your proposal
- Partners or collaborators
- Production staff
- Core staff or key administrative personnel

Examples of support are, but not limited to, the following:

- An ISL interpreter
- Services of an access support worker.

Note: you can apply for these costs in addition to maximum amount available for the award and include them in the total amount requested.

2. Public disability access costs - costs for making your work accessible to others

We want to ensure that more people enjoy high-quality arts experiences and that everyone can access and enjoy the work we fund.

These are costs for making your work accessible to persons with disabilities and should be considered a normal part of your work.

Example of access costs to make your work accessible to your audience may be:

- Having an ISL interpreter for your event or performance
- Using an audio-description service

- Making your website compatible with screen readers
- Producing exhibition materials in other formats such as in Braille or audio.

What if the funding provided is less than I requested?

If you are offered funding that is less than you requested, we will discuss with you how you plan to deliver your proposed activity when reviewing the revised budget.

We do not expect you to dilute or remove any access support for making your work accessible to others that you have included in your application.

Note: include these costs in the total amount requested within the maximum amount available for the award.

How to apply for disability access costs

We need to understand why you are applying for disability access costs and how they meet the needs of your participants or your audience.

If you include disability access costs in your proposal, you must

- Show the costs in two separate lines where indicated within the application form.
 - a) Line for personal or participant disability access costs only
 - b) A line for public disability access costs only

Note: whether you use the Arts Council budget templates or your own budget document, the two types of disability access costs must be shown separately within your budget.

To see how we assess your application, see section 3 of the guidelines below.

1.6 What may you not apply for?

You may not apply for more than one project award in any artform/arts practice area in any one round of funding – e.g. the same applicant cannot apply for a Theatre Project Award and a Music Project Award in the same round. Activities and costs that you may not apply for include the following:

- Major capital purchases
- Ongoing core costs
- Activities or costs that do not fit the purpose of the award (or strand of award) that you are applying for

- Production or presentation costs
- 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 or which will have commenced before 1 July 2025
- Activities undertaken for charity-fundraising purposes, for participation in a competition, or for primarily profit-making purposes
- Activities that have already been assessed by the Arts Council, unless you demonstrate that you have further developed the proposal since previously applying **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
- Projects that involve the touring of existing productions
- The development of work that is not clearly separate from, and additional to, the work of organisations already being supported through other Arts Council funding (e.g. Strategic Funding, Arts Centre Funding).

1.7 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 the person 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 a Theatre Project Award you **must** submit the following supporting material online:

1. For each individual named at **question 2.8** in your application we require:
 - a) Up-to-date CVs or biographies (max. three pages)
 - b) A letter or email of confirmation outlining the nature of the collaboration, that they have agreed the financial terms of their involvement, and that the planned outcomes are understood and agreed.
2. Where there is support from an organisation in your application, you **must** provide letters/emails of support and/or copies of MOUs outlining

details and/or confirming any commitments of income either in cash or in-kind towards the proposal.*

***NOTE:** All individuals and orgs that are part of your proposal must be listed in question 2.8 of the application form

Please feel free to also provide background information on the organisation if it is not one with which the Arts Council is likely to be familiar.

3. A completed Arts Council Theatre Budget template (Microsoft Excel document only) – for this you **must** use the latest version of the Arts Council’s budget template, which you can download from the [Theatre Project Award](#) page of the Arts Council website. This budget is separate from and in addition to the budgetary information requested within the application form. This should set out all of the individual costs, and any projected income, associated with the project. Note: this **must** include proposed rates of pay for all personnel involved; rates of pay should be realistic and commensurate with the practitioners’ level of professional experience.

Note: you **must** use the latest version of the Arts Council Theatre budget template to submit details of your budget; this is to ensure consistency and to enable assessors to analyse budgets in a competitive-funding context.

4. At least one and no more than three samples demonstrating previous work relevant to the proposed project. Please see the section on acceptable file formats for further information on this.
 - Applicants to **Strand 1**, Playwriting, **must** provide a sample of previous writing for theatre by the playwright of up to ten pages.

Depending on the nature of your proposal, samples of work might include:

- Still images
- Moving images/video material of no more than ten minutes’ duration
- Script/writing samples of no more than ten pages.

You are encouraged to group similar types of supporting materials into single documents where you can (e.g. CVs, samples of previous work, letters/emails of support)

Note: if you fail to provide all of the above, your application will be deemed **ineligible** and will not go forward for assessment.

In order to assess the volume of applications that we typically receive in a timely manner, we **cannot** review any supporting material other than those listed above.

Additional material required in certain circumstances:

- If you are seeking additional disability access costs to support work by individuals with access requirements, please provide a document outlining these costs, and outlining how they have been arrived at. Please be sure to include your total access costs listed separately within the Arts Council Theatre Budget Template.
- 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](#)).

* **Note:** you may be asked to provide more evidence of adherence to these policies should your application be successful.

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

Format for supporting material

All supporting material for this award **must** be submitted online. Hard-copy supporting material will not be accepted. You are encouraged to group similar types of supporting materials into single documents where you can (e.g. CVs, samples of previous work, letters/emails of support).

For further information on the formats you may use for supporting material, see section **2.3 Prepare any supporting material required for the application.**

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

1.8 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 the Arts Council's 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 1.4 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

1.5 above (except where you are applying for an additional amount for participant or personal disability access costs).

6. You apply for an activity or purpose that you cannot apply for, as set out in section 1.6 above.
7. You fail to provide all mandatory supporting materials, as set out in section 1.7 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.

1.9 How long will it take to get a decision?

The length of time it will take us to make decisions will depend on how many applications we receive. In general, depending on the volume of applications, it will take somewhere between twelve and fifteen weeks.

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 or laptop to submit your application. Our Online Services website does not work on phones or tablets.

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

-
- PC**
- Windows 7 operating system or a newer version of Windows
 - OLS will work with the latest versions of all browsers – e.g. Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Safari, Mozilla Firefox

-
- Mac** Mac OS X v10.5 Leopard or a newer version of the Mac operating system
- OLS will work with the latest versions of all browsers – e.g. Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Safari, Mozilla Firefox
-

Note: you will also need to have Microsoft Word (Desktop) 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=iT9Xxgmg0Eo>

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 (Desktop)/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 **1.7 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 such as CVs and letters of support, etc. 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 a PDF document and upload it as a weblink-supporting document.

While not an exclusive list, examples of acceptable sharing platforms include YouTube, Vimeo, Soundcloud and Bandcamp.

Please note that we will not accept links to the following sources:

- File-sharing sites – e.g. Google Drive, OneDrive
- Social-media platforms – e.g. Meta, Instagram
- Your personal website

Note: assessors will only view materials in the URL links that you provide. It is important that you check that any links in the document work **and** that they bring the viewer to the correct source to be able to access and view your supporting material.

Please do not flag your material as ‘private’ as it will not be accessible for the assessment. Change the settings on your video to ‘unlisted’ if you do not wish the application supporting material on your YouTube channel to be publicly viewable.

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/CVs, detailed budget and any other required supporting material (see section **1.7 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. How we assess your application

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

Once received, your application will be processed by the Arts Council as follows:

-
- 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

- 2 Your application is checked for eligibility. Please see section **1.8 Eligibility** above.
 - 3 In some cases, the arts area to which you have applied may not be the best fit for your proposal. In such a case, we will contact you and ask you if you are happy for us to move your application to a more appropriate arts team. You will then have a choice to have your application moved, or for it to remain under the arts area to which you applied.
 - 4 Adviser(s) and/or staff make a written assessment of the application based on the criteria for assessment set out in section 3.3 below.
 - 5 Adviser(s) and/or staff recommend an application as shortlisted or not shortlisted.
 - 6 A peer panel reviews all shortlisted applications and associated materials, then scores and makes decisions.
 - 7 Decisions are communicated in writing to applicants.
 - 8 Decisions are noted by Council.
-

3.3 Criteria for the assessment of applications

Applications are assessed in a competitive context and with consideration of the application form and the supporting materials submitted. All applications are assessed against criteria of **a)** artistic merit, **b)** how they meet the objectives and priorities of the award, and **c)** feasibility. Each of these criteria is described in turn.

While applicants may select other artforms/arts practices as being relevant to their application, the application will be assessed by the team responsible for the chosen primary artform, and which may, in certain instances, ask for a secondary assessment from another team.

A. Artistic merit

The assessment of artistic merit focuses on the applicant and on those involved in the project, as well as on the nature of the proposed arts activity, and includes consideration of:

- The quality of the idea and the proposed arts activity
- The track record of the applicant and the artistic personnel involved in the project as evidenced in their CVs and other supporting materials submitted
- The potential of the applicant and the artistic personnel as evidenced in the application form and the supporting materials submitted
- The artform/arts-practice context in which the activity is proposed
- The ambition, originality and competency demonstrated in the proposal
- How the application demonstrates innovation, experimentation and collaboration.

B. 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**).

C. 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.

3.5 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.

3.6 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 at which 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.

3.7 Outcome of applications

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

You will be informed by email if your application has not been shortlisted. If your application has been shortlisted, it will go forward for panel review.

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 circumstance you will be informed in writing.

3.8 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.