

# Funding Guidelines 2021/22

**Updated: January 2022**

This document aims to tell you about our aim, values and funding criteria so you can decide whether you and your work are eligible for a grant. Please do read all the information within these guidelines including the overarching criteria, as well as the category-specific criteria.

If you would like to make an application, please check [our website](#) for further information about the grants we make and how to apply. If you have any additional queries, please feel free to contact a member of the team.

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## 1. Our aim and values

### Our aim

We aim to advance the wellbeing of people, society and the natural world by focusing on the arts, environment and social action. We believe these areas can make an important contribution to wellbeing.

### Our values

Our values reflect how we work. We are a **responsive** funder, listening and responding to what applicants judge is important.

We have developed funding guidelines, enabling us to be **discerning** in our decisions about whom and what to support.

We value our relationships and seek to have a **personal touch**. Our Trustees are involved at every stage of an application, and we always visit or meet an applicant before a grant is made.

We prefer to be **connected** and are in regular contact with relevant colleagues and partners in the charitable world. We also like to keep in touch with grantees, convening and linking with them and others from time to time.

We are willing to be **flexible**, and may venture outside our funding criteria if we believe a different approach would be more effective.

## 2. Criteria that apply to all our funding

We receive many more applications than we can support, so we have to be selective. In 2020/21, we received 251 applications of which 168 were eligible. 42% of the eligible applications were taken to second stage. Of the 70 applicants invited to submit a full proposal six were declined, representing a success rate of 91% at second stage. We are looking for work that has a high impact and achieves positive change or long-lasting benefits. This may include tried and tested approaches as well as new ways of working.

**We ask that organisations applying to us meet the following two criteria, which apply to all applications within each of our three areas of interest:**

### 1 Organisations

We prioritise UK-registered charities with an income between £100,000 and £10m. This focus allows us to use our capacity and resources by supporting organisations that are established and experienced in the work they undertake. If your income is greater than this we will only consider a grant if you are uniquely placed to help meet our funding objectives. We call this the 'only they can do it' test. If your income is lower than this, then we would expect to see clear evidence that your organisation has managed a turnover of £100,000 previously, or is on track to do so soon.

### 2 National significance

We want our funds to make a difference, with as wide an impact as possible. This may involve creating art of the highest quality; working across a wide geographical area; or sharing, expanding or replicating successful initiatives. We also recognise it may be necessary to change the system, and that by influencing policy, campaigning or adopting other approaches more far-reaching and longer-term benefits are possible.

National significance may look different in each of our categories:

- *Arts* – the creation of new work in itself has the potential to create a national or international legacy to inspire others. Using excellence as a key criterion is designed to strengthen and widen impact, thus demonstrating UK-wide significance. Partnerships, whether cross-art form, cross-sector or geographical, may also enhance this significance, and touring may contribute to a national footprint.
- *Environment* – certain species, habitats and/or ecosystems have national significance due to their relative scarcity and/or the benefits ('ecosystem services') they provide to people and communities. Some organisations occupy a distinctive, national niche; alternatively, the issue being tackled may be relevant to all or a large part of the UK. We also consider the biodiversity of the UK Overseas Territories to be of national and/or international importance.
- *Social Action* – we look to support organisations whose work is rooted in practical experience and applied at a national or UK level. This significance may result from the importance of the subject tackled or the approach taken.

More information about our approach to funding work in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is in the FAQ section, later in this document.

**What we are looking for:**

- *Effectiveness and impact* – this could mean a good understanding of the needs being met and how best to tackle them; awareness of how your work adds value and relates to and complements the work of others; effective systems to monitor and review progress; a culture of learning, reflection and improvement; and being alert to opportunities to widen impact.
- *Strong governance and management* – a diverse and representative organisation with a well-qualified and engaged board and strong and inspiring leadership; a thorough understanding and oversight of finances across the Board and leadership team; and awareness of the organisation's strengths and weaknesses.
- *Partnerships* – this could mean organisations that are well connected, understand how they fit within their world, and work well with relevant others.

**Core funding** has long been our signature and preference, but we are also happy to make grants for projects or programmes. Core funding is funding which goes towards the core costs of delivering an organisation's work. These costs could include:

- staff salaries, training and expenses
- day-to-day running costs and operations
- monitoring and evaluation
- communications and digital innovation.

If most or all of the activity that your organisation undertakes fits with the relevant category guidelines you can apply for unrestricted core funding, but if only some of your activities are relevant to our categories, then the funding request should be demonstrably directed to the work relevant to the category in question. All applicants should demonstrate a funding need and are not expected to hold excessive free reserves, i.e. unspent and unrestricted funds.

### 3. Our categories

#### ARTS: Creators and Curators

##### Our aim

We believe arts and culture have the potential to enrich and transform lives, and we recognise its inherent value and unique effects. We will fund organisations that nurture, incubate and commission those people who make and curate work.

##### What we fund

We concentrate our Arts funding under two separate headings:

1. **Creators in the performing arts** – we focus on the creation of the highest quality, nationally significant work, by funding organisations which collaborate with, commission or otherwise support artists to create new or re-imagined work. We prioritise applicants from outside the capital, but do consider those based in London where the proposal would bring significant benefits elsewhere. (*Organisations can apply at any time under this heading.*)
2. **Curators in museums and galleries outside London** – we aim to strengthen those institutions that focus on making use of curatorial skills to attract a wider public. (*This is an annual programme with its own funding guidelines and decision-making process; please see [our website](#) for the latest information.*)

##### What we are looking for in the performing arts:

Organisations that do some of the following:

- organisations with new or original work at their heart
- track record of producing excellent work
- exciting, fresh and imaginative ideas and models of working
- regional work that is valued and recognised nationally and internationally
- integration of emerging talent and artist development into the artistic programme of work (i.e. developing an individual is not the organisation's main or sole focus)
- an understanding of actual and potential audiences and how the artistic plans relate to them.

## **ENVIRONMENT: People and Planet**

### **Our aim**

We believe that a healthy and well-functioning environment is essential to the health and resilience of people and nature. Our aim is to contribute to greater harmony between people and the planet, through the protection, restoration and enhancement of the natural world. We are interested in organisations that understand the interdependence of communities, habitats and species and apply this in their thinking and practice. Often it is the system that has to change, so we will also support those working to influence government and the market through policy, advocacy and campaigning work.

### **What we fund:**

We concentrate our Environment funding under two main headings:

1. ***Protecting the seas*** – safeguarding and restoring the marine environment, through more and effectively managed protected areas; ocean recovery; engaging coastal communities; reducing overfishing and tackling other harmful effects of human activity on the sea, such as pollution.
2. ***Creating richer, more sustainable places on land*** – building healthier ecosystems in urban or rural settings, through better management of these areas; experimenting with or linking together habitats; large-scale interventions that help restore places of special significance. We will also support work to reduce or prevent damaging effects of human activity, such as climate change, air pollution or pesticide use.

Our focus is in the UK and UK waters. However, we are also keen to support land and marine-based work in the UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs). For work in the UKOTs, we welcome applications from UK-charities working in partnership with local Territory-based NGOs and from charities based in the UKOTs. UKOTs-based charities can apply either directly or through a charity conduit in the UK. For more details on this please see the FAQs, specifically the question: ‘Do you make grants overseas?’.

### **What we are looking for:**

Organisations that do some of the following:

- seek to improve the natural environment
- understand both the significance of habitats for human wellbeing, as well as the impact of people on nature
- look for sustainable solutions by ensuring that the livelihoods and economic needs of local communities are integrated into their thinking and strategy
- work collaboratively
- work in an evidence-based way
- tackle causes as well as symptoms.

## **SOCIAL ACTION: Championing Change**

### **Our Aim**

We aim to help create an inclusive society where all can thrive, by supporting organisations which work to create positive changes at a systemic level.

We believe people can create change, and will focus on individuals and organisations coming together to tackle disadvantage, divisions and inequality. We also believe that meaningful relationships are central to a shared sense of identity and community. We are interested in organisations which share these beliefs and work to ensure that individuals, community groups and national bodies connect with one another, and are listened to by government and the agencies that shape our lives.

### **What we fund**

We want to support those with ambition to achieve positive change at scale while also creating benefits for those involved. We will therefore concentrate our funding in pursuit of a thriving society on work which:

1. ***Improves systems through policy, advocacy and campaigning*** – through building bridges between people and the establishment by creating opportunities for contact and dialogue; enabling those with experience of an issue to have a voice on what matters to them; ensuring professionals and their organisations listen and respond; using this communication to advocate or campaign for improving policies, practices and systems.

#### **and**

2. ***Actively involves those with personal experience of the issue tackled*** – reflecting our belief that those closest to an issue understand it best. This means both people with direct personal experience of a problem, and those who have expertise and insight from working alongside them. A high priority will be finding new ways to draw on these experiences and skills, and engaging them in identifying and working on the change they want to bring about.

We expect a variety of individuals and communities experiencing a range of inequities and discrimination to benefit from our funding. Given this broad canvas, we will prioritise work which tackles the greatest barriers created by disadvantage, divisions and inequality.

### **What we are looking for**

Organisations that:

- are rooted in practical experience, rather than working exclusively on policy
- understand the need to build people's confidence and skills so they are ready to engage with others
- value, promote and learn from the experience of those they support
- do not shy away from the unpopular or difficult cause
- seek to tackle causes as well as symptoms.

## 4. What we do not fund

We do **not** consider applications from **organisations** that:

- have applied unsuccessfully within the previous 12 months
- focus on a single medical area, such as an individual disease, organ or condition
- are hospitals, hospices, schools, colleges or universities, unless the application is from a leading university specialist unit. More information is in the next section (FAQs).

Grants are **not** made to or for any of the following **purposes**:

- individuals, including student grants or bursaries
- general and round-robin appeals
- capital developments and individual items of equipment
- promotion of religion or places of worship
- arts organisations and projects whose main focus is supporting and developing an individual, rather than when new work is part of an artistic programme
- learning and participation in the arts, where this is the primary focus of the application
- leisure or individual holiday schemes
- sport, where this is the core of the organisation's activities
- education, such as initiatives linked to the curriculum, arts or environmental educational projects
- animal welfare, captive breeding and animal rescue centres
- medical research or treatment, including drug and alcohol rehabilitation services
- prisons and offenders
- one-off campaigns
- one-off events, such as conferences, trips, seminars, master classes, summer schools, single commissions or productions.

## 5. Frequently asked questions

### Will you support work that takes place in a single UK country?

We fund organisations from any part of the UK whose work has impact across the UK.

Work based in individual countries may be funded where:

- The work is of UK-wide significance - this may be because of the issue tackled, for example, Scotland has the most substantial marine environment in the UK, or because the work is so exemplary or pioneering that it will be of special interest and relevance elsewhere in the UK; **or**
- The work covers more than one UK country - which could be a single organisation working across borders or a partnership of organisations in different countries; for example, an activity in Wales and NI would qualify; **or**
- The organisation is working across England.

### Do you make grants overseas?

Our Environment category provides grants for work in the UK Overseas Territories, and for marine projects outside UK waters by UK charities.

For work in the UK Overseas Territories we fund UK-based charities working in the UKOTs, and we are also happy to accept direct applications from Territory-registered charities, including through UK-based conduits. We aim to take a nuanced approach and distinguish between Territories based on their respective charity governance systems.

In practice this means the following:

- NGOs registered in Territories with UK-modelled charity governance systems (**Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, and St Helena**) will be able to apply directly.
- Charities registered in Territories which have non-profit oversight systems that are primarily finance-focussed (**Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, Turks & Caicos**) will also be considered for direct funding. However, to ensure an extra level of compliance, NGOs from these Territories will be required to show evidence that they have been successfully accepted as the lead organisation on a UK Government Darwin Plus project grant.
- Given the minimal local charity governance we will not accept direct funding requests from NGOs which are registered solely in the **Falkland Islands**, and will require applications to be made via a UK-registered charity.

If your Territory is not listed, or if you have any queries regarding the most appropriate application mechanism, please feel free to contact a member of the Grants Team for advice.

### When do you fund core costs and when do you prefer to fund a project?

As a responsive funder, we listen to what you judge is important. Our main interest is in supporting organisations whose work matches our funding priorities. We believe that core funding is usually the most valuable contribution we can make. If you think a project grant would be best, you can apply for that instead.

We are aware that a modest core grant will have a limited impact on the finances of larger organisations. If your turnover is close to or over £10m a year, it may be better to apply for a project grant.

### **Does an application have to fit more than one of your categories?**

An individual application or grant does not directly have to relate to all three elements of our aim – relating to people, society and the natural world. An environment grant, for example, might focus on a particular habitat, with the individual and social benefits only becoming evident indirectly or in the longer term.

If you are doing work which fits more than one of our categories, then such applications must be a good match with the criteria of at least one category, with a link to another being a bonus.

### **What type of work can I apply for under the creators in the performing arts strand?**

We tend to fund organisations working in dance, music, opera and theatre that are directly involved in creating the new or re-imagined work, rather than working through partner venues, festivals or other organisations. Sometimes we fund festivals because they commit to creating and presenting new or re-imagined work that has a legacy beyond the festival. Finally, our priority is to support the artistic excellence of the work, rather than its educational value or social benefit – although we recognise that these are both positive additional benefits. We expect applicants to demonstrate their artistic excellence by providing us with evidence of positive audience feedback, awards and accolades and professional reviews.

### **When will you fund research?**

We recognise that rigorous research and policy analysis can provide the evidence and arguments to advocate for important changes in practice. We prefer to fund this sort of work if it is grounded in real life experience, includes the voices of those affected, and is likely to make a practical difference. When considering such proposals, your track record, expertise, knowledge of the context and understanding of how to effect such change will be important considerations.

### **Do you fund universities?**

Not usually, and not for their core work. Exceptionally, we may consider an application from a specialist unit if you are a centre of excellence and a leader in your field. Your work should:

- be distinctive and likely to make a practical difference
- involve partnerships with charities or NGOs
- have a budget that includes no contribution to overheads
- strongly match our funding interests.

### **How much can I apply for?**

Our minimum grant is circa £10,000. There is no maximum. Last year our grants ranged from £5,000 to £150,000 and the average grant size was around £100k. To get an idea of the kind of grants we award, take a look at the [grants list](#) on our website or on [360Giving](#).

### **How long will you make a grant for?**

Most of our grants are for two or three years, but as a responsive and flexible funder we are willing to consider different timeframes. The Grants Team is on hand to answer any questions you may have in this regard. As mentioned above, to get an idea of the kind of grants we have awarded in the past, take a look at the grants list on our website or on [360Giving](#).

**When is the best time for me to apply? Do you have any deadlines?**

For the majority of applications there are no deadlines and you can apply at any time. We make decisions regularly throughout the year. A summary of how our applications are processed, and how long that takes is available [here](#) on our website.

Some work strands, such as the Museums and Galleries Fund have an annual application deadline. Please check the website for more information on these.

**How quickly will I know your decision?**

We will acknowledge your application within one week.

We have a two-stage application process. We aim to deal with all first-stage applications within 10 weeks, though most people will hear more quickly. On the rare occasion an application takes longer, we will be in touch.

Second-stage applicants are asked to apply within a month of being invited to do so. You should receive a decision within a maximum of three months.

**When can I reapply if I have been turned down?**

One year from the date of submitting your application.

**When can I reapply if I have a grant? Do you provide continuation funding?**

In the past we asked grantees to wait for one year after their grant had ended before coming back with a new funding request. However, our experience of providing funding during the Covid-19 pandemic has led us to suspend permanently the need for organisations we fund to take a break before re-applying to us.

**Can I discuss my application with you before I apply?**

We are always happy to discuss potential applications. Before you get in touch, please read our guidance.

**Do I have to be a registered charity to apply?**

We will only make grants to registered, excepted or exempt charities. However, we will sometimes make an exception if we feel the organisation is uniquely placed to help meet our funding objectives. We call this the 'only they can do it' test.

**What does it mean when the Foundation says they are a Living Wage funder?**

We are a Living Wage Friendly Funder, which means we are committed to tackling low pay by encouraging the organisations we support to pay the real Living Wage.

You can find out more about the Living Wage [here](#). The Real Living Wage is updated annually in November, and as at January 2022 the current rates are £9.90 across the UK and £11.05 in London.

We want to support our grantees to pay their employees the Living Wage as outlined above. Please do consider this when applying for funding to cover salaries within your proposals. The Grants Team may suggest changes to budgets where we think that the Living Wage is not being offered.

**What can I do if I am unhappy about any stage of the application process?**

If you have any concerns or comments relating to your experiences through any stage of the application process please direct them to our Head of Grants, Dorothee Irving ([dorothee@ellerman.org.uk](mailto:dorothee@ellerman.org.uk)).

**How long will we have to wait before receiving funds after having a proposal approved?**

We aim to distribute the first payment of a grant as soon as possible after receiving and approving the required bank details as set out in the offer letter. The only time this is delayed is if there are conditions on the grant, for example: grant is payable upon recruitment to a role.

**Who makes the decisions at the different stages of the application process?**

The Grants Team perform simple eligibility checks when an application is submitted and may reject proposals at this point if they do not pass these tests. Trustees are responsible for all decisions at the first and second stages and are assisted by the Grants Team, to help them make these decisions

## 6. How to apply

### Before you apply

Before you apply, please make sure that you have read our funding guidelines carefully to ensure that your organisation is eligible and that your work meets our funding priorities.

We receive many more applications than we can fund. Unfortunately, this means that even if your work matches our areas of interest, we may not be able to make a grant.

If you are unsuccessful, we will ask you to wait for one year before you reapply. It is therefore important to make the best case you can at the first stage.

### The application process consists of two stages:

#### Stage 1

1. Please complete a two A4 page proposal using a minimum font size of 10/11 with the following headings:

- A brief summary of your organisation's aims and activities
- How your proposal meets our requirement that the work is of a national significance
- What you would like us to fund and why you are well placed to do this work
- How your proposal fits the criteria for the relevant category you are applying under

2. Ensure you have a copy of your most recent annual accounts to hand.

- You will need to upload a copy of your most recent audited accounts
- If the year-end date of your accounts is more than 10 months ago, we will also ask you to upload your latest management accounts.
- If your accounts show a significant surplus or deficit, high or low reserves, we will ask you to provide a brief explanation.

3. Our online portal is available through our website, and you can create an online account ([here](#)). Through your online account you can then upload your first stage proposal and financial information.

We make funding decisions throughout the year so you can apply at any time. However, if you are applying to the Museums and Galleries Fund there is an annual deadline and separate application process, so please check our website for details.

Once you have created your online account and uploaded your first stage application you will receive an instant confirmation. We will contact you within two weeks to let you know whether your proposal is eligible.

#### Stage 2

If your application proceeds to second stage, we will ask for a more detailed proposal and additional information. Then we will arrange to meet you to find out more about your work.

At this second stage, we aim to make a decision within three months. If your application takes longer, we will be in touch.

#### Further advice

If you are unsure about whether to apply or need further information about the application process, please call us on 020 7930 8566 or email [gareth@ellerman.org.uk](mailto:gareth@ellerman.org.uk).

You can find full details of both stages of our application process [here](#).