



Nottingham City Council

Communities, Environment and Residents

Cultural Investment Fund Grant 2026-2027

Funding Cultural Activity Across Nottingham

Applicant Guidance Notes



1. Introduction

This guidance is intended to provide information to potential applicants to the Nottingham City Council Cultural Investment Fund Grant 2026-2027.

Nottingham City Council is looking to use funding to contribute to the costs of community activities and events which will:

- Increase the number of cultural events and activities taking place across all wards of the City.
- Increase the number of children and young people engaging with cultural events and activities
- Strengthen neighbourhood pride and community cohesion through cultural activities
- Celebrate the heritage and cultural diversity of the City
- Support the growth and development of existing community festivals and events
- Increase access for residents to existing cultural organisations and venues

All events and activities supported using this grant must be:

- accessible to all
- delivered before 31st March 2027

The grant operates over a one stage application process by the submission of a full application.

There isn't a closing date for applications to the grant. It will remain open until all available funds have been allocated.

2. Grant Amount

The maximum amount of grant available per application is £5,000.

This funding can be used to contribute to:

- the salary costs of colleagues involved in the delivery of the events and activities and/ or in the management, administration and reporting associated with this grant.
- volunteers' expenses
- purchase of tickets to access City based cultural venues for educational opportunities
- costs of marketing and promotion of the events and activities
- other costs associated with the delivery of the events and activities

Match Funding

Although match funding is not required, there is an opportunity for applicants to identify additional money they will be putting into the activity and show the value of an in-kind contribution in their application.

Local authorities have been strongly encouraged to consider match funding from the private, public and third sectors and leverage options when selecting communities and place projects to fund. This will maximise the value for money and impact of the grant fund.



Organisations will need to take into account the timescales for when the grant funding will be paid. Therefore, applicants should consider their own cash-flow situation when planning the timing of projects, paying invoices etc.

Payment of grant funds to support cash-flow can be considered if it is included as part of the application. However, grant recipients would be required to repay any grant received if any support, or equipment, included in the application is not delivered, or purchased, as specified in their grant agreement.

All grants are made at the discretion of Nottingham City Council and are subject to availability.

3. Project Outputs and Outcomes

The Cultural Investment Fund Grant aims to support projects that deliver some, or all, of the following outputs and outcomes:

Outputs

Output Indicator for reporting	Unit of measurement	Evidence required
Number of local events or activities supported	Number of events/activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">List of eventsRelated promotional materials
Number of people reached	Number of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Record of attendanceNumbers at each event
Number of volunteering opportunities supported	Number of opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">List of opportunities created

Outcomes

Outcome Indicator for reporting	Unit of measurement	Evidence required
Improved engagement numbers	Number of people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Numbers attending each event, compared to same or similar previous event
Increased users of facilities/amenities	Number of users	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Numbers attending each facility/amenity, compared to previous year(s)
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support	Number of programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">List of eventsRelated promotional materials



Number of new artistic commissions by professional / freelance artists	Number of artistic commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of artwork • Photos
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4. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to receive a grant your organisation **must**:

- Be located within, or deliver your services within, the administrative area covered by Nottingham City Council
- Be a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), Community Interest Company (CIC), Company Limited by Guarantee, social enterprise, registered charity, public body which delivers or hosts community projects or a constituted body, individual artist / freelancer **NOT** a private company or a for private profit business
- Individual artists and freelance practitioners may apply where they can demonstrate appropriate experience, insurance and ability to meet the grant conditions
- Have been in operation for at least 12 months
- Have delivered similar community engagement activities in Nottingham City in the last 12 months
- Not have an outstanding debt with Nottingham City Council

Also, your organisation must:

- Not have signed any contracts for work or equipment for which grant funding is sought. Any purchases / contracts initiated prior to a grant award will not be eligible for funding
- Have an organisation bank account
- Have all the necessary permissions, licences and insurances to operate your organisation
- Satisfy that the proposals are viable, offer value for money, are realistic and deliverable

Your organisation agrees to:

- Give consent to Nottingham City Council to involve your organisation in publicity for the grant scheme, e.g. press releases, case studies and photographs (subject to commercial sensitivity)
- Partake in periodically agreed monitoring after the grant payment, which will help us to assess the success of the Cultural Investment Fund Grant

5. Procurement

Applicants who are proposing to spend more than £2,499 on a single item must seek three written quotes or prices from relevant suppliers of goods, works and / or services.

Quotes can be written quotes provided directly from suppliers on letterhead or screen shots for online retailers / suppliers

Details of these quotes **must** be included in the table at Appendix A of the application form.



Applicants must not have purchased any equipment for which grant funding is sought in advance of applying. Any purchases made prior to a grant award will not be eligible for funding.

6. VAT

Where organisations are buying equipment and resources and are able to claim back the VAT, the grant should only be used to cover the net cost (i.e. the cost excluding VAT).

All supplier quotes must clearly specify if VAT is applicable, and state the price including and excluding VAT.

If your chosen supplier is not VAT registered, we will require an email verification from them to confirm this.

7. Ineligible Project Costs

There is no definitive guidance on which costs are ineligible. However, the following cannot be supported by grants:

- Reimbursement of goods / services already purchased prior to the date of a grant offer letter
- Financial charges, such as bank charges and interest
- Organisations in difficulty
- Organisations subject to an outstanding order for the recovery of illegal State Aid
- Activities that may bring Nottingham City Council into disrepute
- Costs associated with gaining statutory permissions or consents
- This list is not exhaustive, and specific items can be checked for eligibility by contacting the grant team at econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

8. UK Subsidy Control Regime

This grant scheme will be administered under Minimal Financial Assistance rules. – you're allowed up to £315,000 in Minimal Financial Assistance over any rolling period of 3 financial years. Information on the scheme can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime

Any aid awarded to you under the Cultural Investment Fund Grant will have to be declared if you apply, or have applied, for any other public funding. Therefore, if successful, the offer letter must be retained and shown to any other public body to which you apply for funding for the three years following the offer.

False declarations will lead to the recovery of the value of the assistance provided plus interest.

Note that where an organisation is part of a group, the £315,000 limit applies to the group as a whole for public sector support within the United Kingdom.



9. Geographical Area Covered

Applicants must be located within, or deliver their services within, the administrative area covered by Nottingham City Council.

10. Timeframe

The Cultural Investment Fund Grant will be open to applications pending funding availability. Projects awarded funding will be required to spend their grant award by the date, or within the timeframe stated, in the grant offer letter and grant agreement.

All projects funded through the Grant **must be** fully completed and all grant funding **spent** by 31st March 2027.

11. Application Process

Step 1 - Application

If your organisation and project is eligible for support through the Cultural Investment Fund Grant, you should submit a fully completed application form and the required supporting documents. A copy of the application form can be found using the following link:

www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/CulturalInvestmentFund

Step 2 - Application assessment

Completed applications must be sent by email to econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Assessment of applications will involve three stages;

1. **Gateway – using Section 1 of the application form**
2. **Scoring – using Section 2 of the application form.**

The maximum score for each question in the application form is 5, based on the scoring framework below, but some are weighted through the multiplication of the assigned score. For example, a score of 5 weighted by a factor of 5 will equal a total score of 25.

The maximum score and multiplication weightings are shown on the application form under each question.

Score	Assessment	Description
1	Unacceptable response	Response to the question is unacceptable or no response received. Does not give the Fund confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the proposed project.



2	Poor/weak response	Inadequate detail provided or some of the answer not directly relevant to the question. Is supported by none or a weak standard of evidence in several areas.
3	Satisfactory response	Acceptable response in terms of the level of detail, accuracy and relevance. Is supported by a satisfactory standard of evidence in most areas but a few areas lacking detail/evidence.
4	Good response	Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question and supported by good standard of evidence. Gives the Fund confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the proposed project. Meets the Fund's requirements.
5	Very good response	As Good, but to a better degree in terms of precision and relevance. Is comprehensive and supported by a high standard of evidence. Gives the Fund a high level of confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the proposed project.

3. Moderation

Scores will be reviewed, in order to ensure consistency and fairness.

Grants will be awarded to the applicants with the highest score. The number of successful organisations will be dependent on the availability of funds.

Step 3 - Grant Offer

If your application is successful, you will be notified in writing, and a grant agreement will be issued. Any award made will be based on the terms and conditions outlined within the grant agreement.

NB You must not enter into any financial or contractual arrangement with any supplier prior to the project being approved, and not before the date that the grant agreement is signed by Nottingham City Council. To be clear, any expenditure prior to the date that the grant agreement is signed, dated and returned cannot be claimed.

Nottingham City Council reserves the right to withhold, vary or reclaim funding if any information supplied through the application and approval process proves to be inaccurate, misleading or incomplete.

Step 4 - Payment of Grant

Successful applicants will be issued a grant agreement. Once this has been countersigned, the payment of the grant will be approved.

You will not be required to send invoices for this grant. You will need to register as a supplier on the Nottingham City Council system if you have not previously done so. Further details of the payment processes will be included in the grant agreement.



80% of the grant awarded will be paid after receiving the signed grant agreement. Subject to satisfactory performance and submission of the end of project monitoring report, the remaining 20% will be paid.

12. Performance and Monitoring

Grant recipients will be required to report progress against the outputs and outcomes in their grant agreement at the end of the project. This will be required in order to receive the final instalment of funding.

Further details of the performance and monitoring processes will be included in the grant agreement.

13. Commercial Confidentiality

It is generally presumed that the information provided at all stages of the process is sensitive or confidential and will be treated as such.

14. Help and Support

If you would like to discuss the general eligibility of your proposal prior to applying, please contact econdev.grants@nottinghamcity.gov.uk.