



UK Shared Prosperity Funding 2025-26 Vibrant & Active City Programme Cultural and Music Sector Grants

Applicant Information

**The deadline for applications is
12 noon on Monday 1st September**

We are delighted to announce that we have been successful in securing an allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) to support Birmingham's Cultural spaces and Music sector.

This grants programme will deliver the aspirations of [Birmingham's Economy and Place Strategy](#) and [Birmingham's Cultural Framework Together on Culture](#), meet UKSPF criteria, and have potential legacy beyond March 2026 by:

- Growing Birmingham's creative and cultural sector and increase its sustainability
- Creating greater visibility of culture and the arts across Birmingham

Information, Advice and Guidance

Our friendly team will be offering 2 online information sessions. These will be recorded and available to view via our webpages if you are unable to attend the live sessions.

To apply for Culture grant funding you must be registered with Birmingham City Council.

The registration form, application form links and dates for online information sessions can be found on our [Vibrant & Active City Programme webpage](#)

Access Support

We want to make sure everyone can apply for our funding.

If you need any of this information in a different format or have any questions, please email art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk

We will be happy to help you.

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About the Vibrant and Active City Programme

Through this programme, we are investing in Birmingham's cultural spaces and strengthening the city's vibrant music sector. We'll do this by supporting a range of projects (mainly capital with a small amount of revenue) through three dedicated funding streams.

Capital Grant Funding

1. Enhancing Cultural Spaces Fund
2. Music Infrastructure Fund

Revenue Grant Funding

3. Music Development Fund

Eligible applicants can apply for a capital and a revenue grant. You can find out more about each funding stream in the sections below.

Capital Grant Funding: £200,000 (total across 2 funds)

Through our capital funding we want to support cultural and music spaces to grow and become more sustainable.

You can only apply for a project focused on physical assets. You can include the purchase of equipment, but this must support the enhancement of a space supporting sustainability and revenue generation.

This fund does not include revenue costs such as day-to-day operational costs, activity, programme or event delivery, marketing or promotional expenses, or consumable items.

Your capital project can include costs associated with planning, executing, and acquiring or enhancing physical assets contributing to the project's overall operation and success. These costs include direct expenses like labour, materials, and equipment.

You can apply to the Enhancing Cultural Spaces Fund or the Music Infrastructure Fund, but not both. If your project is specifically focused on a music space, you should apply to the Music Infrastructure fund.

For building works and landscaping applicants are required to own the identified space or have a lease of 3 years or more.

1. Enhancing Cultural Spaces Fund

Eligible applicants can apply for capital grant funding between £5,000 and £25,000. In total we will distribute £100,000 Enhancing Cultural Spaces funding.

We aim to make up to six awards.

This fund is aimed at improving the sustainability and revenue generation of local cultural spaces by supporting projects to refurbish, enhance or develop cultural spaces for impact and benefit to the cultural sector and the people it engages beyond March 2026.

For this grant, a cultural space is any physical place where creativity comes to life; where people gather with professional artists (or creative practitioners) to make art, share ideas, and celebrate creativity. These spaces can be studios, galleries, theatres or anywhere that is dedicated to supporting artistic and creative expression.

Professional artists (or creative practitioners) are people who are working (or aspiring to work) independently or freelance in the arts; this can be any artform e.g. visual arts, dance, performance etc.

2. Music Infrastructure Fund

Eligible applicants can apply for capital grant funding between £5,000 and £25,000. In total we will distribute £100,000 Music Infrastructure funding.

We aim to make up to six awards.

This fund is aimed at improving the sustainability and revenue generation of music spaces by supporting projects to refurbish, enhance or develop spaces for music creators, music performers and music audiences for long-term impact and benefit to the music sector and the people it engages beyond March 2026.

For the purposes of this grant, a 'music space' refers to a physical location that supports music-making, sharing, and preservation. This could include places where people gather to rehearse, perform, record, participate in, or celebrate music. This can include venues which are primarily for music events but have other uses.

Revenue Grant Funding: £20,000

Through our revenue funding we want to support projects focused on delivering time-limited activities, programmes and initiatives.

You cannot use this grant funding for capital costs such as the purchasing of equipment or expenditure on physical assets.

Your revenue project can include costs for the project's overall operation and success. These costs include direct expenses like labour, materials, and equipment and indirect costs such as rent, IT and premises costs. All indirect costs should be proportionate to the project and less than 15% of the total project cost.



3. Music Development Fund

Through this fund, we want to support the development of grassroots music across Birmingham, including developing the producers, promoters and musicians that make it so unique. Applicants can include in their proposals any initiative that can contribute to these purposes. Examples of eligible applications could include:

- Micro training programmes that extend the knowledge and understanding of music producers and promoters across the city.
- Micro talent development programmes - potentially run by music producers or promoters - that enable greater access to Birmingham's music scene for emerging artists, or in other ways provide insight, knowledge and support for emerging artists.
- Initiatives that promote musical collaboration, help develop alternative or emerging musical genres, or in some other way spark innovation and creativity across Birmingham's music scene.
- Initiatives or programmes that enable music artists greater access to developing their skills and performance in a range of settings, from ad-hoc community spaces to established music venues.
- Support for individual promoters, producers and musicians to pilot their ideas and approaches.

We are open to supporting experimental ideas and approaches to developing Birmingham's music scene.

Applicants can apply for revenue grant funding between £2,000 and £10,000. In total we will distribute £20,000 Music Development funding.

We aim to make up to 5 awards.

Information for all applicants

Projects we can and cannot support

We can support:

- New projects
- A new version of a project which has happened before
- Existing projects (as long as there is no double funding, the grant can be separately monitored and reported, and the project meets the funding criteria)

All projects must:

- Have a start and end date with clear things you want to achieve in that time



- Be relevant to the people that will take part or the people that will benefit from the project

You cannot apply for:

- Projects that take place outside of the Birmingham City Council area
- Projects that are not deliverable before 31 March 2026
- Ongoing overheads or running costs outside of your project
- Activities or services that have already taken place or will take place before we can make a decision on your application
- Cash prizes and fundraising
- Projects that make a profit - Your project will not be eligible if your project budget includes surplus income that is not being spent within the project
- Political or religious activities
- Indirect project costs over 15% of the total project cost
- Ongoing regular repair or maintenance activities that are not part of a refurbishment such as fixing something that's broken or not working

You do not need to have any match funding or in-kind contributions to apply for a Vibrant & Active City Grant.

Dates

You must send us your application before **12 noon on Monday 1st September 2025**. We will let you know the decision approximately 6 weeks after this date.

Project delivery cannot start until the grant award agreement is signed.

All project delivery, spend, evaluation and reporting must be completed and sent to us before 31st March 2026.

Who Can Apply?

This funding is primarily for Culture and Music Sector Organisations.

This grant programme is only open to organisations based in Birmingham that are committed to the practice, sharing, and preservation of arts and creativity.

This includes Arts (such as drama, literature, music, theatre, visual arts), Combined Arts (such as outdoor arts, carnival arts and festivals), Film, TV, Radio, Museum Activities and Heritage.

We've designed this funding to specifically support these kinds of organisations, recognising their vital role in the city's cultural life.



Eligible organisations constituted in the last 12 months or without a full year's accounts can apply.

Your organisation can be:

- A registered charity
- A Community Interest Company (CIC)
- A charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
- A limited company with a not-for-profit constitution

Your organisation must have:

- A registered address in Birmingham with a Birmingham City Council postcode. You can check that your organisation's registered address has a Birmingham City Council postcode by visiting [the government's find your local council webpage](#)
- A signed governing document (Constitution or Articles of Association e.g. set of rules). This document must show that the organisation is not-for-profit demonstrates that the project you are applying for matches your organisation/group arts and creativity objectives
- A committee or board with at least three unrelated members to provide independent oversight and support
- A bank account in the name of your organisation which requires two signatories (dual authorisation)
- A copy of the most recent annual accounts and balance sheet
- Experience of managing similar projects and budgets

For capital building works and landscape projects eligible applicants must also have:

- Sufficient income to meet any ongoing costs such as maintenance after the capital project is completed
- Eligible applicants are required to own the identified space or have a lease of 3 years or more plus permission and consent in place to carry out your project.
- Successful applicants undertaking works on a building that they are the leaseholder for will be asked to provide:
 - A copy of the tenancy or leasehold agreement
 - A letter or email from the freeholder to confirm that the works are allowable.
- Any necessary building/ planning or other statutory consents in place including a copy of the Listed Building Consent where applicable

The following are not able to apply:

- Unincorporated groups and associations
- Organisations not committed to the practice, sharing, and preservation of arts and creativity
- Organisations registered outside the Birmingham City Council area
- National organisations (including those with a Birmingham office or base)



- Organisations focused on making profits and sharing these profits privately
- Individuals or sole traders
- Schools and educational establishments

If you have any questions about who can apply, please email
art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk

How To Apply

To apply for Culture grant funding you must be registered with Birmingham City Council.

There is no charge to register, but you will need to provide your organisation's governing document.

Once registered, you can apply for an open funding programme.

You will need to complete and upload our project budget and milestones templates to your online application.

Links to the registration form, templates and application forms can be found on our [Vibrant & Active City Programme webpage](#)

Using Artificial Intelligence (AI)

We do not discourage the use of AI in funding applications. However, it is important that your application reflects your organisation's authentic voice and clearly communicates your intentions, ensuring that any AI-generated content is meaningfully adapted.

Applications must show us:

- How you have worked out your project costs
- That you have considered any permissions and licences that might be required to successfully deliver your project
- That your project can be realistically achieved within the grant timeframe
- That you have planned your project in a way that makes it possible for lots of different people to benefit (so it is Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive)
- That you have tried to make your project as environmentally sustainable and climate friendly as possible.

The people working on your project must be paid [the Birmingham Living Wage](#) or more.

Environment Sustainability and Climate Action

Julie's Bicycle works with Arts Council England to deliver an ambitious Environmental Programme providing resources, tools, and training to support cultural



organisations to take climate action. For more information visit the [Julie's Bicycle website](#)

The British Council has a global initiative, uniting people around the world to meet the climate challenge called 'Climate Connection'. To find out more about Climate Connect and getting involved visit the [British Council website](#)

Programme Outcomes and Outputs

The Vibrant and Active City Programme is focused on achieving specific UKSPF output and outcome indicators which will contribute to economic growth for Birmingham's Cultural and Music sectors.

Your project must deliver at least one output and one outcome.

Outputs

As a result of the Vibrant and Active Programme, we want to:

- create or improve amenities/facilities
- create or improve tourism, culture or heritage assets
- support local events or activities
- engage people as participants and audiences

Outcomes

As a result of the Vibrant and Active Programme, we want to:

- Increase the number of people using facilities/amenities
- Increase the number of visitors
- Increase the number of people engaged in the local area/activities
- Create organised volunteering roles as a direct result of the grant funded project

You will be required to identify baseline data where appropriate, track progress and collect evidence to show how you achieve these goals throughout your project.

There are other additional UKSPF indicators that might also be achieved through your project. A full list of the UKSPF indicators 25-26 is available on our [Vibrant & Active City Programme webpage](#)

How we choose which projects we give grants to

Marking

- We will check that your organisation or group is eligible to apply
- We will check that your project activities are eligible for the grant programme strand
- We will judge how well your project will achieve the programme outcomes and outputs and the impact it will have



Discussion

A group of people will then look at all of the marking together, discussing whether it is fair, and challenge it if needed. They will agree the final funding recommendations between them.

The recommendations will be scrutinised by the Head of Birmingham City Council's Cultural Development Service.

If your application is successful, the Council may not necessarily award the full amount requested. For example, if some costs are not eligible for funding or there is high competition for funding.

If we decide not to fund your application, we will write to you to let you know. We will explain our decision and offer you a feedback session with a Culture Officer.

Award

If you are successful, we will send you an offer letter and the Conditions of Grant Aid. The Conditions of Grant Aid need to be signed by your organisation and Birmingham City Council; we recommend allowing two weeks for this to happen.

Project delivery cannot start until the grant award agreement is signed.

If you have any queries about this programme, how to apply or your proposed project please email your enquiry to: art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk including 'Vibrant & Active City' in the subject line.

Subsidy Control

Support with a financial value provided by Birmingham City Council is consistent with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Guidance and information on the UK subsidy control regime is available on [the Government website](#).