



Cultural Partnership Grants Programme

Prospectus

2023–2026



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Manchester City Council's Cultural Partnership Grants programme. This prospectus provides an overview of the funding programme and application process. The application form and guidance document can be downloaded from www.manchester.gov.uk/grants.

The Cultural Partnership grant programme was set up in 2011 to provide core funding for cultural organisations, and has run for three consecutive rounds.

The new round of funding will run from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. Grants are available of £10,000–£40,000 per annum.

Who is eligible to apply?

The Cultural Partnership grant programme provides core funding for:

- cultural or arts-based organisations – as set out in the organisation's Memorandum and Articles of Association. This includes:
 - Combined Arts, Dance, Museum, Film and Broadcast, Heritage, Literature, Visual Arts, Digital Art, Music, Photography, Theatre and Performance, and Craft
- constituted community and voluntary and not-for-profit organisations
- organisations based in the city of Manchester or that have a track record of delivering activity that benefits the people who live in or visit the city, or organisations that benefit the local economy.

Detailed information on eligibility is available in the Application Guidance.

Aim, priorities and principles of the funding

The aim, priorities and principles for the Cultural Partnership fund were co-designed with people from the cultural sector in spring 2022. There was a consultation with the cultural sector in summer 2022

Aim

To fund and support cultural organisations that contribute to making Manchester a thriving, equitable, vibrant and liveable city with high-quality cultural and creative experiences that all Manchester people can benefit from.

Priorities

Cultural Partnership funding is for organisations committed to delivering high-quality work that is inclusive and equitable, representative of the city's residents, and that contributes to Manchester's zero-carbon ambition.

Organisations will need to demonstrate that they meet all four of the following priorities.

1.High quality

We create brave, bold, and aspirational culture with life-enhancing impacts. Quality is defined by the people we work with. It is measured by the impact we have and the progress we make.

2.Inclusion and equity

We recognise the systemic inequities that impact on Manchester residents' health, wellbeing, and quality of life. We are committed to widening access, participation and progression in culture and creativity.

3.Representation

We are on a well-planned journey to becoming representative of the diversity of the city of Manchester. We can demonstrate how this is reflected in decision-making and leadership roles in our organisation.

4.Zero-carbon

We will progress towards becoming zero-carbon by 2038 or earlier, and develop climate change action plans in line with this.

Principles

These principles are shared by Manchester City Council and the funded organisations.

Relevance

The grants will support organisations that can:

- demonstrate awareness of the current context for Manchester residents
- contribute to the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy
- respond to the changes and challenges the world faces.

Collective action

Co-production, partnership working and learning from one another will lead to the greatest impact.

Flexibility

These grants will continue to be offered as multiyear, core funding. This reflects the IVAR principles and our shared belief that flexibility (of both funder and grant recipient) will be central to supporting organisations to be sustainable and responsive. For more information see the [IVAR open and trusting grant-making page](#).

Strategic context

The Our Manchester Strategy (Forward to 2025) sets out a vision for the city to be in the top-flight of world-class cities by 2025, when the city will:

- have a competitive, dynamic, sustainable and fair economy that draws on our distinctive strengths in science, advanced manufacturing, and culture, creative and digital businesses – cultivating and encouraging new ideas
- possess highly skilled, enterprising and industrious people
- be connected, internationally and within the UK
- play its full part in limiting the impacts of climate change
- be a place where residents from all backgrounds feel safe, can aspire, succeed and live well
- be clean, attractive, culturally rich, outward-looking and welcoming.

The recent refresh of the Our Manchester Strategy took into account the progress already made in achieving our priorities, as well as the significant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the city and our residents.

Alongside the pandemic's significant health challenges came an increase in unemployment, greater usage of food banks, a rise in loneliness and mental-health concerns, and a huge impact on children and young people's education, training and employment opportunities. These are not new challenges for some of Manchester's communities, but they have been magnified. COVID-19 has disproportionately affected our Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, residents on low incomes, and those with disabilities, due to higher incidences of underlying health conditions and occupational risks. As uncertainty and unemployment have increased, the importance of tackling the underlying causes of poor health, deprivation and poverty – and ensuring equal access to the best education – have been brought to the fore.

In the next few years we will need to work together to overcome these urgent challenges while continuing to build on the city's many strengths.

The Our Manchester Approach sets out how we will achieve Forward to 2025 – working together to improve the lives of the people who live in Manchester.

This involves:

- taking time to listen and understand
- working together and trusting one another
- showing that we value our differences and treat people fairly
- 'owning' it and not being afraid to try new things
- being proud and passionate about Manchester.

Zero-carbon

Manchester City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. As part of this we have set an ambition for the city to be zero-carbon by 2038 or earlier. The Council's Climate Change Action Plan includes a target to reduce our direct carbon emissions by 50% by 2025. It also commits the Council to build climate change into grant-funding agreements with cultural organisations.

All successful organisations funded through the Cultural Partnership programme will be required to adopt a Carbon Reduction Plan. The attached Zero-Carbon Guidance outlines the main features we require within this plan, including carbon literacy training for all staff. Your plan will need to be approved by the Council, followed by annual progress reports. The Council will support funded organisations to develop their plans and take forward carbon literacy training. For further information visit the Council's [zero-carbon](#) page.

Funding

The Cultural Partnership grant programme provides revenue funding to support cultural organisations with core costs. It is not project funding.

The grant programme lasts for three years – from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. The initial annual budget for the grant programme is £311,000 per year, which includes a transfer of funding from the Council's Signature Events budget. The overall budget remains subject to Manchester City Council's annual budget-setting process.

Individual grants will be between £10,000 and £40,000 per year. Payments are made quarterly, in arrears, on receipt of complete monitoring information.

All applications will be assessed on their eligibility and merit. Previous receipt of Cultural Partnership Agreement grant funding does not offer any advantage or disadvantage.

Please contact us if you are currently funded by the Council's Signature Events.

The application process

The application form and guidance are available at www.manchester.gov.uk/grants

Call for applications

Friday 2 September 2022

Information sessions

Wednesday 7 September 2022,
2.00pm – 3.30pm via Zoom

Friday 16 September 2022, 10.30am–12 noon
The Mechanics Centre, 103 Princess Street,
Manchester, M1 6DD

Deadline for applications

9am on Friday 7 October 2022

To avoid disappointment we recommend submitting your application at least 24 hours before the deadline. Late applications will not be considered.

Notification of decisions

Friday 30 December 2022

Due diligence process and grant agreements

Tuesday 31 January 2023

Start of funding programme

Saturday 1 April 2023

How decisions are made

1. Eligibility check

Applications will be checked for eligibility by a Council officer. Applications that do not pass the eligibility check will be automatically rejected.

2. Scoring

Eligible applications will be assessed and scored by three Council officers. Assessors follow guidance to undertake the scoring. The assessors complete a summary sheet of your application, giving details of the scores plus brief comments on how scores were awarded and the evidence to support their assessment. The consistency of the scoring is checked by an officer who was not involved in the scoring process. All applications that score less than 50% will be rejected. The Guidance document details how scoring will be carried out.

3. Balancing

At the balancing stage we will review the highest scoring applications against the following to ensure that the overall aims and priorities of the fund are met:

- the balance of art forms
- the types of cultural and creative opportunities available
- the target audience and participant demographics across the portfolio.

Further details on balancing are available in the Application Guidance.

4. Decision-making

The decision-making panel comprises two senior Council officers and one representative of a cultural organisation based in Manchester that is not eligible for these grants and does not receive any type of funding from the Council. The panel will make the final decision on the applications based on the application scores and balancing, and agree a portfolio of funded organisations.

The panel may also use its discretion to adjust the final grant awards to individual organisations to balance the total budget against the amounts requested.

5. Offer

All applicants will be notified of the outcome by email by 30 December 2022. Feedback is available on request. Panel decisions are final, and appeals are not permitted. Funding offers are conditional on the successful completion of due diligence.

Culture Team officers and members of the scoring and decision-making panels will be unable to accept offers of hospitality, eg. complimentary tickets, from any eligible organisations between 2 September 2022 and 7 October 2022 (the application period). The same will apply for applicant organisations from 7 October 2022 until after the date of the decision-making panel (no later than 30 December 2022).

Due diligence process

Successful organisations will be required to submit all the financial, governance and procedural documentation listed at the start of the application form, which will be reviewed by Council officers. If applicants state they will be working with vulnerable groups, they will be required to produce the appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. Further guidance on the Council's expectations around safeguarding are provided within the guidance.

All the documents will be reviewed to ensure that they meet the Council's requirements. Provided an organisation passes the due diligence stage successfully, the Council will then provide a grant agreement, which includes the funding terms and conditions for you to sign and return.

Information sessions

Two information sessions will be held during the application period. Organisations can attend these sessions to ask questions about the prospectus, application form and guidance and assessment. If you would like to attend one of the online sessions, please register on Eventbrite in advance.

- Wednesday 7 September 2022, 10.30am-12 noon via Zoom [register here](#)
- Friday 16 September 2022, 10.30am-12 noon, The Mechanics Centre, 103 Princess Street, Manchester M1 6DD. [register here](#)

Funding relationship

We are committed to applying the IVAR principles of open and trusted grant-making to this programme (see above IVAR link on page 3), both in the application process and the ongoing relationship we have with funded organisations.

As part of this, the Council will:

- be open and transparent about its requirements and give feedback about the decisions made
- only collect the information that is needed
- keep reporting requirements proportionate to the level of funding, with good notice of requests for information
- accept that there is risk involved and respond flexibly to changing priorities and needs
- be flexible, and support funded organisations to be sustainable and responsive.

All funded organisations will be allocated a Relationship Officer and Support Officer who will meet you every six months and be your main point of contact throughout. We will also bring the portfolio together every six months to promote networking, collaboration and learning.

Funded organisations will be expected to:

- be open, transparent, and co-operative
- keep in regular contact with the Relationship Officer, sharing any major financial or business changes or risks
- submit a carbon-reduction plan, and annual progress reports
- complete six-monthly monitoring on outcomes, provide case studies, and complete the annual Cultural Impact Survey, which collects data on the following:
 - zero-carbon
 - funding and income
 - footfall
 - health and wellbeing
 - productions and commissions
 - audience (age, gender, ethnicity, disability, place of residence)
 - engagement and participation (age and place of residence)
 - schools
 - employment and skills (age, gender, ethnicity, disability, place of residence)
 - volunteers (age, gender, ethnicity, disability, place of residence)
 - board members (age, gender, ethnicity, disability, place of residence)
 - qualitative data on impact.

Further information

If you require clarification or further information on anything relating to the grants programme, please contact Louise Lanigan by email at louise.lanigan@manchester.gov.uk or phone 07949 598292. Please note that Louise cannot help you to complete your application form or offer advice on the likelihood of your application being funded.

If you have general queries about applying for funding or developing your organisation, please contact Macc on 0333 321 3021 or info@mcrcommunitycentral.org (www.manchestercommunitycentral.org).

Support will be provided on a first come, first served basis and is subject to capacity.

If you require information about the demographics of the city of Manchester, please visit:

www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200088/statistics_andamp_intelligence.