

# Wales Cultural Recovery Fund - Freelancer Support



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Frequently Asked Questions

### General

#### **What is the purpose of the Freelancer Fund?**

The purpose of the Fund is to support Freelancers working in the cultural sectors facing financial challenges in the period from April 2020 - March 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

#### **What do we mean by 'freelancer'?**

Freelancers are sometimes known as contractors, may run their own business and are often defined as self-employed although they differ slightly from the self-employed. Freelancers may carry out multiple jobs on behalf of different companies, and often tend to work alone. A freelancer tends to work on numerous short-term contracts, offering services and time to various organisations in return for an agreed fee. Freelance workers are common in music, writing, journalism and web design industries.

#### **How much funding is available?**

A total of £7m is available to support freelancers across Wales.

#### **How will the funding be delivered?**

The funding will be delivered by local authorities in Wales, on behalf of Welsh Government.

### Eligibility

#### **Who can apply for the Freelancer Fund grant?**

Support is available to assist freelancer professionals whose work has direct creative/cultural outcomes, who work in the four key sub sectors targeted by the Cultural Recovery Fund:

- The Arts;
- Creative Industries;
- Arts and Heritage Events;
- Culture and Heritage.

These are broad sectors, covering a number of professions (the [Creative Industries Federation infographic](#) provides a useful illustration) and, in principle, applications can be received from freelancer workers in these sectors. However, please note, this funding is specifically for cultural and creative subsectors and roles **that that been forced to cease**

**work and/or face difficulty restarting because of the impact of Covid-19 restrictions.**

Those in roles that have been able to continue at previous or near previous levels of activity with or without support (e.g. architects, graphic and web designers, games designers etc.) should not apply.

This Fund is also not intended to support freelancers in the sports sector. Welsh Government is working with Sports Wales to discuss support for the sports sector in Wales.

**I am a freelancer, but I am unable to provide evidence within the timeframes set out in the Fund criteria due to being on a period of paternal / maternity leave. Does this make me ineligible?**

No, you are eligible to apply. However, we would still want to see some evidence of your work as a freelancer. For example, you could provide evidence outside the agreed parameters of the eligible periods of work / loss of work set out in the guidance.

**I am a freelancer but I also work part time, would this make me ineligible? If not, will I receive a smaller sum of money?**

Applications are welcomed from both full and part time freelancers. The same flat grant of £2,500 is awarded in both cases, subject to meeting wider eligibility criteria. However, please note this grant is targeted at freelancers in most need of support due to loss of earnings as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We would not expect to see freelancers applying if they also have a well-paid job which has protected them from the worst of the financial impact of COVID-19.

**I'm a freelancer, but I operate as a limited company. Does that make me ineligible?**

No, if you can demonstrate that you are the only person operating as part of that limited company and can provide details through your annual accounts, you would still be eligible to apply.

**I have received Start Up Grant support in the past. Does that make me ineligible?**

Yes, if you received support earlier this year from the Start Up Grant launched in June 2020 as a result of COVID-19 to help new businesses survive the economic consequences of coronavirus. However, if you have only received general start up support in the past, you would still be eligible to apply.

**I have applied for support from the Film and TV Charity Covid-19 Recovery Fund for UK film, TV and cinema workers. Am I also able to apply for a grant from this Fund?**

We would advise that you apply through both schemes if you are eligible to apply, given the similar timeframes for processing of applications. We will however be working with the Film and TV Charity to identify where applicants have applied through both schemes, to avoid duplication and to ensure the Funds reach as many freelancers in need in Wales as possible. It is likely that if you are awarded a grant through the Film and TV Charity Fund you will not receive additional support from the Wales Cultural Recovery Freelancer Fund.

## **I've already received funding from the UK Government Job Retention Scheme / Self Employment Income Support Scheme, can I still apply?**

Yes. If you have received previous support from either the Government Job Retention Scheme and Self Employment Income Support Scheme and are still experiencing financial challenges you are eligible to apply for this grant.

## **Is the grant taxable?**

Yes. You will have to declare it as income as the fund is to support cash flow and replace income lost due to Covid19'

## **Application process**

### **How do I apply?**

Individuals can apply for the grant by accessing the Culture Recovery Fund Eligibility Checker on the Business Wales website:

<https://fundchecker.businesswales.gov.wales/culture>

If eligible to apply you will be directed to your local authority website where you will be able to access the online application form **or** you will be able request the application form.

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

A grant of £2,500 is available per individual, to support with immediate cash flow to help through the disrupted period.

### **When can I apply?**

The Freelancer Grant is open to applications from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Will there be accessible formats of the guidance document and application form?**

Yes.

### **How should I complete the form if I can't access the internet?**

If there are any accessibility issues for you that might prevent you from completing an online application form please call the Business Wales helpline on 03000 6 03000.

### **What is the deadline for applications?**

There is no formal deadline for applications. The Fund will run over two short phases. Phase 1 will open from **5<sup>th</sup> October** for a short period, of around one to two weeks, and will then be closed by local authorities while initial applications are assessed. This will be followed shortly after by a second phase. The length of time each phase is open and the gap between phases will be dependent on the number of applications received. This phased approach is being used to allow us to assess demand against the funding available and also aims to provide enough time for freelancers to prepare applications.

Local authorities has absolute discretion on the duration of the fund.

**I live in RCT but work primarily in Cardiff. To which LA should I submit my application?**

You can only apply to the local authority you are currently resident in, not where you work.

**How will applications be appraised? Will the applications be treated on a first come first served basis?**

Yes. Applications will be treated on a first come first served basis. To provide enough time for freelancers to apply, and to ensure applicants experiencing any issues with the process have an opportunity to address these, we will be splitting the application process into two short phases. Phase 1 will open from 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**How quickly will I find out if I have been successful?**

Receipt of your application will be acknowledged within 10 working days, and we aim to process grant applications within 30 days of receipt.

Decisions on applications will be made based on the information provided in the application form, associated evidence and information checks that are conducted from other sources. All information required must be submitted. If any data is incomplete or incorrect or the evidence provided is insufficient we will contact you, but if queries are not satisfied the application will be rejected.

**If successful, when will I receive the funding?**

If applications are approved you will receive a grant offer by email notifying you of the award of the grant. Grant offers will be open for 14 days – if not accepted within this period the offer will be withdrawn. Grants will be paid on the basis that 100% of the grant is paid up front.

Applicants must accept the grant offer by e-mail before payment can be made.

**Can I appeal if I am not successful?**

If your application is unsuccessful, you will receive an email outlining the reason[s] for rejection. There is no appeal process. The Local Authority has absolute discretion on the terms of the fund.

**Evidence / Supporting documents**

**What is the purpose of asking for a bank statement?**

Bank statements are being used to corroborate the bank details you have submitted. Bank statements will not be assessed or used as part of the appraisal process.

**How many banks statements do I have to provide and how recent should they be?**

One, recent bank statement will need to be provided. Recent is defined as a bank statement for one of the three months prior to the date of application.

**Do I have to provide personal banks statements or do they need to be business account statements?**

You can provide personal or business account statements, depending on the circumstances.

**How must bank statements be presented? Can these be screen shots of my banking app?**

Where possible copies of full statements should be provided. However, screen shots of banking apps will be accepted.

**I am a performer, and use a different name as a performer to my legal name. Some of the evidence I provide will include my performing name. Is this OK?**

Yes, however, you will need to provide some supporting evidence connecting your legal name to your performing name.

**Does all 'other information' need to be provided, or just some? For example, is a CV required or optional?**

Yes. All the information listed in under 'other information' must be provided. We will be unable to process your application if it is incomplete or if you have failed to submit the necessary documentation.

If you are unable to provide a CV, a detailed LinkedIn account will be accepted.

**What should be included in the accompanying CV?**

We would expect the applicant to provide a standard CV to include your name, address, details of skills and qualifications, previous employment / work.

If you are unable to provide a CV, a detailed LinkedIn account will be accepted.

**What 'other' form of proof of identity is acceptable?**

There is a specific list of 'other' forms of proof identify that are acceptable. These are a paper based driving licence or adoption certificate.

**Post award**

**What monitoring will be undertaken?**

There will be a post completion monitoring exercise undertaken where you may be contacted for your feedback on the operation of the Fund, for information on how the grant has supported you and to ask whether you are still working as a freelancer in Wales.

We will contact you if you have signed up to the Freelancer Pledge.

## **Freelancer Pledge**

### **What is the 'Freelancer Pledge'?**

One of the key commitments aligned to this funding is our ambition to develop and deliver a freelancer pledge. Freelance professionals are often active participants in their community, making a positive contribution to our **social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being**. The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to enable a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language as well as think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other. The Freelancer Pledge will help to forge a partnership between creative freelancers and public bodies to achieve this, and help the public sector lever your key skills as a freelancer in the culture sectors to assist us to bring creativity and imagination to all areas of public life.

This might be co-creating solutions with the community, contributing to local development plans and development or bringing new approaches to capital projects. This could be in areas such as culture through to health or sustainable development and built environment. You may already have experience in working in the public realm with partners, be a socially engaged artist, a PTA member or trustee or just an active doer in your community who uses your lived experience to make positive change.

### **How will the Freelancer Pledge work in practice?**

The Welsh Government has established a working group of key stakeholders to develop thinking on the freelancer pledge. The working group includes representatives from the freelancer community, unions and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner.

If you are interested in being a part of this, please opt into the Freelancer Pledge. We'll use your details to inform and involve you in developments. We value the skills and experience of freelancers. We would expect any work undertaken by freelancers as a result of the Freelancer Pledge to be paid work.

### **Do I have to sign up for the Freelancer Pledge?**

No, you do not have to sign up for the Freelancer Pledge in order to receive this funding. However, there are benefits for you as a freelancer in signing up for this pledge, such as opportunities to access paid work.

### **If I choose not to sign up to the Freelancer Pledge, will my application be treated less favourably?**

No, your application will be assessed against eligibility criteria only. The Freelancer Pledge does not form part of this.