

MADE IN COV

Arts & Creative Grants
2026



‘Made In Cov’ Arts & Creative Grants

‘Made In Cov’ is a new grants programme for 2026-27 by Coventry City Council. It will include grants of between £2,000 - £5,000 for organisations and freelance creative practitioners to deliver arts and creative activities for the benefit of residents in Coventry.

This grant programme is part of the delivery of our [Coventry Cultural Strategy delivery plan 2026-27](#) for Theme 5: *Cultural Engagement and Opportunity – Increasing participation in culture through community led activity, improving access to creative spaces, and celebrating Coventry’s diverse cultural identities, including global craft.*

What are the grants for?

Through these grants, we want to support activities that bring more arts and creative opportunities for Coventry residents to take part in, especially in areas where there are less opportunities currently.

We are looking to support a wider range of arts and creative activities, which could range from small festivals to workshops, events, creative projects, exhibitions, showcases, trails or digital arts projects. The main aim is to bring local artists, creatives, residents and community groups together to make sure that everyone has the chance to take part and feel included. Please read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document for more detail about what we mean by ‘arts and creative activities’.

Your activity or project doesn’t need to be a completely new one, as long as it is providing opportunities for Coventry residents to access arts and creative activities. We are especially interested in supporting activities that are **developed together with the communities and audiences** the project is trying to reach, and where residents have real power to influence **what** the activity is and **how** it will be delivered. This can be called co-creation. We have included more information about co-creation in the FAQs section.

We will consider funding projects in all Coventry wards, but are especially interested in projects taking place in our priority neighbourhood areas:

Wyken Croft	Stoke Heath
Clifford Park	Little Heath
Henley Green & Wood End	Bell Green
Willenhall	Foleshill West

We explain more about our priority areas in the FAQs section. To learn more about these areas, you can also visit the Coventry Place Profiler tool:

<https://coventry.culturalplaceprofiler.co.uk/indicators/>

If applying for activities taking place in other areas in Coventry, it is important to think about how you will make sure that local communities can benefit, especially people experiencing disadvantages.

If your activity is something that you are already doing (for example weekly workshops), we need you to tell us what difference this funding will make that is additional to what you are already doing. For example, if you are delivering art workshops, the extra funding might help you to put on more workshops or do a special event.

How much can I apply for?

You can apply for grants between **£2,000** and **£5,000**.

The total grant budget is £50,000 and we are more likely to fund projects and activity between £2,000 - £3,900, although we may give out a few larger grants between £4,000 - £5,000 for bigger projects involving more people and/or partners.

If you are successful in getting a grant, you will be paid in **two instalments**:

- 90% after you have signed a grant agreement at the beginning of the project
- 10% after your activity is successfully delivered and you have provided your evaluation information to us

You will therefore need to think about how you plan to deliver all the activity with 10% of the grant being paid at the end, after your main activity has finished. This may involve you needing to generate some cash from other sources to temporarily cover the remaining 10% until you are paid.

When considering when your activity can start, it is also important to note that it may **take 28 days or more** from signing your contract until you receive your initial payment owing to required processes and timescales relating to setting up suppliers, issuing orders and paying invoices.

Eligibility - Who can apply?

This grant programme is designed to support activities and projects delivered by smaller cultural organisations, creative freelancers or local community organisations with a history of delivering arts & creative activities. This will include:

- Formally constituted organisations which have arts, culture or heritage as an objective within their official governance document (for example, memorandum of association & articles, constitution, deed, or set of rules), or which can demonstrate experience in delivering arts & creative activities in the past
- All organisations applying will have to be formally constituted in the UK and have their own bank account with at least two signatories registered at different addresses
- We will accept applications from organisations working as a partnership, but one organisation must be as the lead organisation and submit the application
- Freelance (for example, sole trader) artists and creative practitioners, who are over 18, based in Coventry with a UK bank account in the name of the applicant
- Priority will be given to applicants based in the Coventry local authority area. Applicants from elsewhere will be considered only if 100% of the activity is delivered in Coventry with Coventry communities, and they can demonstrate previous experience in working with Coventry communities

Eligibility – what kind of activities can I apply for?

To be considered for a grant, your project or activity must:

- Benefit residents of Coventry, with priority to given to projects and activity taking place in the areas outlined earlier in this guidance.
- Deliver arts & creative opportunities - for example: festivals, workshops, events, creative projects, art exhibitions, showcases, art trails, digital arts projects to

Coventry residents. We will prioritise projects & activities which have been designed together with residents.

- The project or activities can be fully delivered with the money that you are applying for – unless you have some additional funding from somewhere else. Remember to think about ALL the costs of your project including management costs, insurance, marketing, evaluation, travel, access costs, etc. For evaluation, we will provide a template which asks questions about your project and/or activity.
- Be delivered by 26 February 2027, by when you will also need to return evaluation information back to us.
- If you have professional artists/creative practitioners in delivering your activity, then please ensure that they are paid fairly for their time. Please see the FAQ section for further information. We would also expect you to prioritise artists and creatives from Coventry.

Eligibility – What we won't fund

- Programmes which do not involve Coventry residents
- Activities taking place on a purely commercial basis
- Activities which have already happened or are going to happen before the decision date for the application
- Duplication of funding for any other projects we are already funding. Continuation of projects previously funded by Coventry City Council may be possible, but the activity would need to meet the criteria for this fund
- Capital costs, including the purchase, repair and maintenance of buildings, equipment or facilities
- Routine running costs or overheads (like rent or insurance) that are not linked to the project or activity being delivered
- Activities taking place abroad or outside Coventry
- School or higher education activities
- Prizes, competitions or fundraising events.
- Programmes without activity and outcomes that cannot be measured and evaluated
- Political or religious promotion or events
- Carbon offsetting where this is not linked to activity delivery

Timeline – Key dates

- Applications open: 15 April 2026
- Applications closing date: 12:00 midday, Monday 11 May 2026
- Applicant notification of outcomes: Week beginning 18 May 2026*
- Delivery period: All activity and evaluation delivered by end of February 2027

*Subject to change depending on the number of applications received. We may contact you for further information/clarification when we assess the applications, please make sure you check your email regularly.

How to apply


- Go to <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/madeincovgrants>
- Download and complete the application form and send to it together with any required attachments to artsdevelopment@coventry.gov.uk no later than **12:00 midday, Monday 11 May 2026**.
- If you have any queries about this commission or the application process, please contact artsdevelopment@coventry.gov.uk.
- Please send us your application form and documents in either Word or PDF formats. Please do not send links to cloud storage locations (for example Google Docs/Drive) or embed images and links in your application form. You can include website addresses but please write them out fully (not hyperlinked) and make sure they are accessible
- If you have any queries about the application process please read the FAQs at the end of this document or drop us an email to artsdevelopment@coventry.gov.uk (Please note that the mailbox is only monitored through standard working hours).

Accessibility

- If you have access needs and wish to discuss ways in which we can help with completing your application (for example providing the application form in a different format), please contact us by email and we will be pleased to assist you: artsdevelopment@coventry.gov.uk
- All applicants are welcome to contact us before submitting an application for an informal conversation or to answer any questions

- Applicants are welcome to partially submit their responses to the application questions in video format, should this be more accessible or preferable. Please note the following conditions:

Guidance for video applications

- We will accept video responses to some of the questions – just please read the below guidance for more information.
- Questions for which we'll accept video responses are indicated in the form with a camera symbol 
- We will still need you to provide us with required documents, and your basic details in writing – please read through the application form for more details.
- If you are applying by video please send us a **private YouTube link** – please do not send any videos via email attachment. For guidance on how to create a private YouTube link, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTgZRF804tM>

Please make sure you read the application guidance really carefully and check that you have included all the documents. If your application is missing information, we may not be able to consider it for funding. Please also respect the word/time limits – we will only consider text/video up to the maximum word/time limit.

Data protection

Coventry City Council complies with the Data Protection Act and the UK GDPR and is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) as a Data Controller. For full details of how and why we collect personal data please view our privacy notice at <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/privacynotice>

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What do we mean by 'arts or creative activity'?

For this application, arts and creative activity refers to:

- Arts, including performing arts such as music, dance, circus and theatre
- Arts, including visual arts and any type of artistic creation
- Literature and spoken word, poetry
- Crafts (limited to artists/makers working by hand)
- Heritage, museums and galleries
- Libraries and archives
- Cultural education (excluding statutory education, further education, or higher education)
- Combined arts
- Community organisations providing arts and creative activities
- Digital art and film/video art
- Photography
- Independent publishers

2. What do you mean by 'co-creation'?

There is no single definition for 'co-creation' but the guiding principles that we recognise in co-created activity include:

A) *Shared Power and Ownership*

- Moving away from the "top-down" model where an artist directs a group. Instead, people involved have a genuine say in the creative direction.
- Both parties agree on the themes, methods, and final activities together.

B) *Everyone brings something to the project*

- The artist brings their skill (e.g. painting, dancing), while the community brings local knowledge, specific cultural insights or their specific lived experience.
- The process should be as rewarding for the participants as it is for the professional artist.

C) *The process is as important as the end result*

- Instead of a pre-set process, the project can happen through workshops,

conversations, and trial-and-error

- The time spent working together is considered just as important than the final exhibition or performance.

D) Fairness and safety are important

- Creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and are comfortable sharing their personal insights or take creative risks.
- Ensuring that the final work reflects the voices of everyone, not just the artists point of view.
- You may want to have a jointly developed agreement in place to agree how you work together, how conflicts are resolved and how the credits are shared.
- Ensuring that if participants are contributing professional-level work they are also compensated for it where possible.

3. What is a small organisation?

We have used the Companies Regulations 2024 classification of micro-entities with an annual turnover of £1 million or less.

Financial **turnover** is the total amount of money an organisation makes from selling its products or services over a defined period, such as a year. It doesn't mean profit - it's just how much money came in before paying for costs such as utilities, wages, or supplies. If you're unsure how to calculate your turnover, refer to your most recent set of accounts or speak with your accountant or finance lead

4. What is a constituted organisation?

A constituted organisation is a formally registered organisation with its own written constitution. This may take a number of different not-for profit forms, including charity, company limited by guarantee or a CIC (Community Interest Company). We will also accept applications from registered community associations with a clearly defined Memorandum of Articles.

5. Can freelancers apply?

Yes. Freelancers (e.g. sole traders) working in the cultural and creative sector, over 18 years old with a UK bank account in their name are eligible. You must be based in Coventry or have previous history in working in Coventry to apply.

6. Why do you need our organisation information?

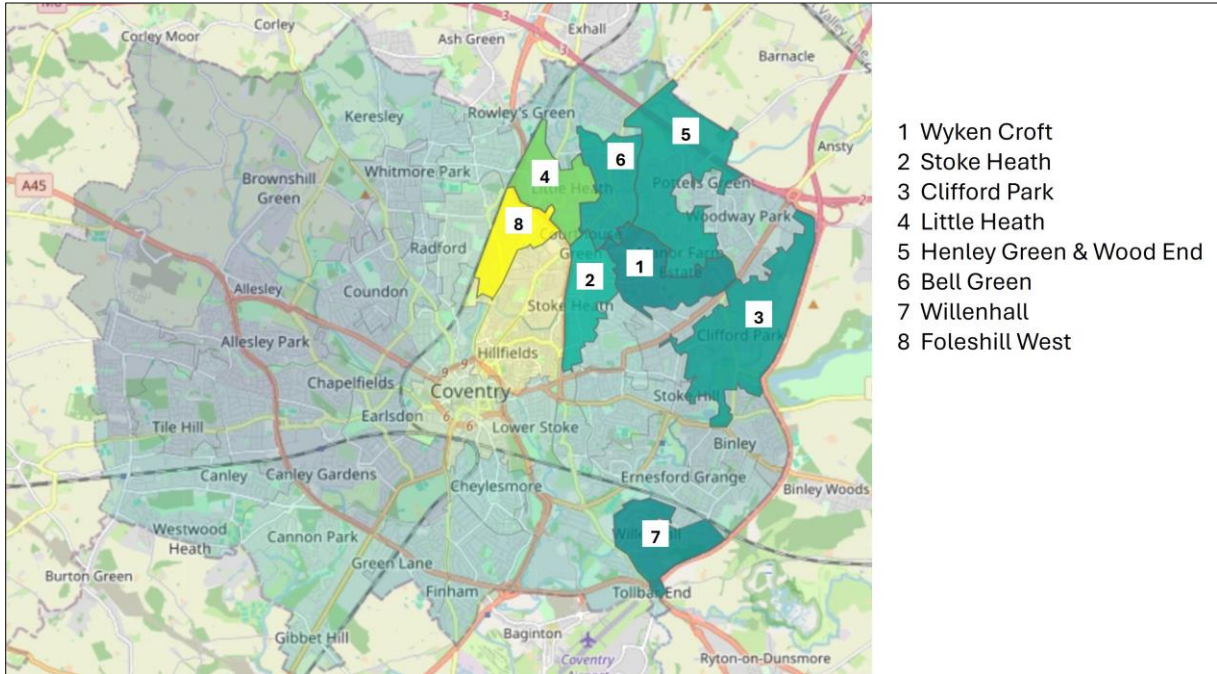
As a public authority we need to exercise due diligence in the use of public monies. This may include checks on the eligibility of your organisation with Companies House

or the Charity Commission. This will help us to:

- Check whether you are engaged in arts and cultural activity
- Check your need for funding support, and the viability of your organisation to remain operational for the duration of the grant delivery period

7. Why are you targeting certain areas?

We are prioritising eight neighbourhoods in which data* shows us that the greatest challenges to cultural participation exist, and which show the most significant changes in cultural participation in recent years, highlighting the need for targeted investment.



*Data taken from the Coventry Household Survey 2018, 2022 and 2024.

8. Coventry’s Cultural Strategy Goals

Coventry’s Cultural Strategy (2017–2027) has been refreshed with input from the cultural sector, freelancers, residents and the Coventry Culture Works Collective, to form [The plan for Culture in Coventry: January 2026 to December 2027](#). These priorities outline what the city aims to achieve over the final two years of the strategy.

9. How will applications be assessed?

Application assessment will be based on:

- The eligibility of you, or your organisation and your planned grant expenditure

- Whether you have fully completed all required parts of the application and provided any additional information or documents requested
- How you have answered each of the questions asked
- The detail and accuracy of your proposed budget
- Balancing criteria will prioritise projects that engage groups least likely to engage in public-funded cultural activities (Global Majority residents, people aged 60+, and disabled residents) and/or deliver activity within the six neighbourhoods identified

Once initial eligibility and due diligence checks have been carried out on your application, an assessment panel will score applications to arrive at a decision. If further questions are required before a decision can be made, shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

10. What happens if I am successful in my application?

If successful, you will:

- Receive a confirmation letter by email, followed by a grant agreement outlining terms and conditions for you to sign and return
- Be issued with a purchase order with which to invoice for your initial grant payment (if you are not already a past supplier to Coventry City Council, a supplier set up stage will be required before a purchase order can be issued)

11. How will the grant be paid?

We wish to provide the majority of the grant straight away to enable you to implement your plans with minimal financial risk. Grants will be paid in two instalments:

- 90% following acceptance of award
- 10% at end of delivery period following submission of your evaluation report

Please note that it may take up to 28 days from receipt of invoice until payments can be made.

12. When can I start my project/activity?

Please note that activity should not take place until after the **3 July 2026**. If your application is successful, you'll need to allow time to be set up as a supplier on the Council's finance system (if you are not already), and up to 28 days for payment to

be processed, subject to receipt of all requested information and documentation. Please make sure your project timeline allows for this, or that you have the cash flow in place to cover any early costs before grant payments are received.

13. How do I know how much to pay artists & creative practitioners fairly?

The rates vary depending on the type of artists/creatives and the art form (e.g. music, visual arts). You may need to do a bit of research online to look at guidance available. We have listed some examples below, but these are just examples. Any payments should always meet the Living Wage Requirements.

Visual arts:

- [Artists' Union England \(AUE\)](#): Provides updated annual "Rates of Pay" guidelines for visual and applied artists, including specific hourly and daily rates based on experience levels.
- [a-n The Artists Information Company](#): Publishes annual "Guidance on fees and day rates for visual artists" and manages the **Paying Artists** campaign, which provides a specific
- [Exhibition Payment Guide](#) for fees in publicly funded galleries.
- [Artquest](#): Provides practical tools and advice on how to calculate a freelance fee, including overheads and negotiation tips.

Music & Performance

- [Musicians' Union \(MU\)](#): Sets recommended minimum rates for a wide range of work, including live performance (gig rates), recording sessions, teaching, and accompanist fees.
- [Equity](#): The trade union for actors, singers, dancers, and other performers. They negotiate collective agreements with major employers (like the BBC or West End) to set minimum pay scales.
- [BECTU](#): Provides pay rate guidance for technical staff, including those in film, TV, and theatre.

Theatre & Writing

- Independent Theatre Council (ITC): Publishes annual rates of pay for theatre practitioners, performers, and managers working in the independent sector.
- Writers' Guild of Great Britain (WGGB): Provides minimum pay rates and contract guidance for writers across TV, film, theatre, and books.
- National Union of Journalists (NUJ): Maintains a freelance fees guide for

writers, photographers, and illustrators working in journalism.

Funding & Sector Support

- [Arts Council England \(ACE\)](#): Does not set rates but has links of website for guidance
- [FRANK Fair Artist Pay](#): A newer initiative providing a Fair Pay Calculator and contract templates to help standardise fair remuneration across the sector.

14. How long do I have to use the grant?

You will have until 26 February 2027 to complete your funded activities.

15. Will I have to report on how the grant is being used?

Yes. An evaluation report will be required at the end of the delivery, so be prepared to gather information during the course of your project/ activity. We will provide a template and further details of evaluation requirements to successful applicants. As a guide, this may include:

- A full budget breakdown showing how the grant was spent
- How the grant has delivered on intended outcomes,
- What benefits were delivered for Coventry residents

This is essential to receive the final 10% of your grant.

In addition, there will be informal check-ins during the delivery period to offer support, answer questions, and ensure your funded activity is progressing as planned.