



# Guidance for North of Tyne Culture & Creative Investment Programme Grants

# About Creative UK

Creative UK is working to build the right environment for the future of the creative industries by helping them raise their ambition, create jobs, grow turnover and build the confidence and networks they need to be truly innovative.

We invest, connect, mentor, advocate and collaborate at all levels of the industry, from individuals and small independents to large internationals, creating the right conditions for success.

For further details please visit [www.wearecreative.uk](http://www.wearecreative.uk)

# About Creative UK North East

Creative UK works with regional partners in the North East to deliver tailored business support and investment opportunities for creative and cultural practitioners, freelancers, organisations and SMEs based in the region.

Our inaugural programme in the region is the North of Tyne Culture and Creative Investment Programme, which is the first of its kind, offering a combined package of specialised investment in the form of loans and equity, grants, and a number of challenge programmes. This is complemented by a tailored programme of business support.

The programme offer is open to freelancers and businesses working in the culture and creative industries in North Tyneside, Northumberland and Newcastle, and is funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

Find out more at <https://www.wearecreative.uk/north-east/>

## What is the grants scheme?

Our grants are designed to support freelancers and SMEs working in the culture and creative sector based in the North of Tyne. With grants of up to £8,000, this financial support is to enable freelancers and SMEs to build on their commercial ideas, and to create opportunities to become more sustainable or grow their businesses.

## Who is it for?

Cultural and creative SMEs and freelancers who are based in the North of Tyne (Newcastle, North Tyneside or Northumberland). We are primarily looking to support enterprises that are registered and trading in the North of Tyne region and contributing to the local creative and cultural economy.

## What do we mean by the 'Cultural and Creative Industries?'

We mean businesses working in the Visuals arts, Performing arts, Music, Film, TV, Media, Immersive and Video Games, Advertising & Marketing, Digital & Creative Tech, Creative Software Solutions, Fashion, Architecture, Heritage, Publishing, Museums, Libraries and Galleries.

## How much can I apply for?

The maximum amount available for business planning support is £8,000. Please note that the average grant award will be £5,000, and in exceptional cases, it may be higher. The application link can be found [here](#).

## Eligible Activity:

These grant investments are to support businesses to enable long-term sustainability and/or growth. This could include:

- Diversification - to try out a new and potentially high-risk business activity which may lead to new revenue streams
- Working new partnerships or existing partnerships in a different way
- Trying out a new business model
- Bringing in short term expertise - digital, marketing, finance, legal, IP or technical (to support product/prototype development)
- Small Capital purchase
- To enable the business to adapt to become greener and more environmentally sustainable
- To acquire new skills within the business, through up skilling the existing workforce or acquiring new staff, including supporting internships/apprenticeships.

The examples provided above are not an exhaustive list – projects and costs will be assessed for suitability as part of the grant application process.

We cannot fund retrospective activity and costs. Good and services already contracted will not be eligible.

To be eligible to apply, you must be able to demonstrate that you have been trading (i.e. making sales) for at least one year.

Priority will be given to SMEs and freelancers who have not previously received a grant through the North of Tyne Culture and Creative Investment Programme.

## Match Funding

A minimum of 50% cash match funding is required for each grant award, this is to encourage the ambition for beneficiaries to see grant funding as means of being coming more resilient and less reliant on future grants for their core delivery.

Examples of match funding can include, but limited to, other grant funds (e.g. Arts Council), earned income, loans, or apprenticeship funding.

Grant funding often adds to business credibility, and can complement or open up other sources of finance, like equity and debt. This fund could also be used for this.

We want our investment to unlock additional and future funding and it is important that beneficiary companies are maximising other private and public investment they can attract.

*Please note, given these grants are part of a North of Tyne Combined Authority programme, you cannot match using other North of Tyne Combined Authority funding to match.*

## Subsidy Control

Eligible businesses must not have received more than €325,000 (circa £280,000 as of May 2021) in Special Drawing Rights and/or De Minimis Aid in the last 3 year rolling period.

# Application Process:

Applications to be made via [Creative UK application portal](#). You will be asked to provide:

- Contact information for yourself and/company
- Financial information about your business
- An overview of your track record or that of your business
- Information about your plans and the impact they will have on your career (if you are a freelancer) /or your company's long-term sustainability and potential growth

Should you have any access or communication requirements relating to our applications and guidance, then please contact the team at [northeast@wearecreative.uk](mailto:northeast@wearecreative.uk). Funds are limited and at the discretion of Creative UK.

## Timelines

There is no deadline, as grant applications are open from February 2024 on a rolling basis until September 2024, with decisions made every 6 weeks until then or until all the funds are committed.

The North of Tyne Cultural and Creative Investment programme runs until March 2025, so ideally, we can provide grants to support activities that will be completed by the end of December 2024. This timeline allows us to make payments and complete paperwork by March 2025.

# Assessment and Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed by the Culture and Creative Investment Programme team. We may also use external assessors and/or appropriately qualified independent professional advisors.

We will typically consider the track record of your business and its management, the feasibility of your plans, and the impact that our support will have on your future sustainability and/or growth.

We anticipate receiving more applications than we can fund. We will look at the strength of each proposal alongside other applications we receive and consider the range and balance of different activity we're supporting e.g. sector geography, diversity etc.

As the Freelance creative sector are unable to access other parts of our investment portfolio, supporting the freelance sector across NTCA will be a priority for this programme.

We recognise that applications may contain commercially sensitive information and all proposals will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

## Decisions

Awards of support will be made solely at the discretion of Creative UK, whose decision is final. Due to the volume of applications, we regret that feedback on unsuccessful applications cannot be provided. Creative UK reserves the right to withdraw the grant support offer without notice, at any time.

# Payment and Monitoring

Grants will usually be paid in two instalments, 50% upfront and 50% upon receipt of interim monitoring information. In specific cases, such as capital purchases, the grant may be paid in full.

We will ask all beneficiaries to provide evidence as to how any grant has impacted your business. Creative UK are distributing funds from the North of Tyne Combined Authority. It is important that we demonstrate the impact of our support.

If you have any questions, contact the North East team at [northeast@wearecreative.uk](mailto:northeast@wearecreative.uk)

# Not Quite Ready for Investment?

We have crafted a bespoke business support offer, to support businesses and freelancers in developing new business models, accessing new markets, and bringing new products/services to market. View upcoming support [here](#).

Keep up to date with all our latest news and opportunities by following us on our [North East LinkedIn](#) and [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#).