

Access Support Top-up

Guidelines and Regulations



ISSUED: APRIL 2023



ALLOCATIONS

SESSION BUDGET	MAXIMUM GRANT PER PROJECT
EUR 50,000	EUR 2,000

CO-FUNDING	DISBURSEMENT
The fund may cover up to 100% of total project expenses	100% following approval of final report

TIMEFRAMES

DEADLINE	RESULTS	ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME
Rolling Call until 16th October 2023 Or until funds are fully disbursed	The results for the Access Support Top-up portion will be notified on the same date indicated for the scheme under which your application is submitted. (The result notification for the schemes is indicated on page 2 of the respective schemes.)	1st July 2023–5th June 2025

1. Introduction

The Access Support Top-up forms part of a portfolio of initiatives designed to help people come together, explore diverse narratives, and unleash their creative expression.

This scheme is aimed at enabling creatives, cultural workers, and communities to:

- Learn through non-formal learning;
- Connect, collaborate and create with diverse players and audiences – locally and abroad;
- Engage diverse participants.

The common thread running through these elements is the cultivation of an environment that is conducive to sustainable development and well-being.

The scheme provides specific top-up support that allows activities and projects – awarded under any of the ACM Funding Schemes 2023 – to adopt the highest standards of good practice, combining equity with quality. This is done in line with the right to culture, that is effectively the cornerstone of the Arts Council Malta Strategy 2025. The Top-up mechanism invests in people, resources, services, facilities, infrastructure, and in multidisciplinary and/or cross-sectoral collaboration for the development and implementation of cultural and artistic projects or activities.

2. Definitions

Accessible events management

- The process of making activities and projects accessible. It involves:
 - The identification of possible barriers to access faced by particular groups;
 - The development of strategies and plans to improve accessibility;
 - The overseeing of the implementation of the accessibility;
 - The assessment of the accessibility.

Applicant

- An applicant may be an individual, a group or an organisation who is a beneficiary of a Funding Scheme 2023 project, activity, or initiative. Applicants cannot be employees of Arts Council Malta or involved in the management of the *Access Support Top-up*.

Application

- An application is a submission, inclusive of all mandatory documents and any annexes to the application form made by an eligible applicant.

Art hive

- A space, facilitated by one or more artists, welcoming people to engage in arts making, as a means of supporting belonging, learning from each other, creative expression, healing, and well-being.

Beneficiary

- The beneficiary is the recipient of the grant. The beneficiary is legally responsible for the implementation of the proposal supported by the scheme. The beneficiary of the grant may not be changed throughout the duration of the funded project and until the final disbursement is issued. The disbursement of the grant may only be issued on behalf of the beneficiary. The beneficiary is responsible to ensure that any VAT invoices are issued on behalf of the beneficiary and include the beneficiary's VAT information.

Community

- A group of people who share values, customs, identities, or practices.

Cultural mediator

- In the migration context, a professional who facilitates the communication (including interpretation) between people speaking different languages and coming from different cultural backgrounds.

Diversity

- Individual differences in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, ethnicity, culture, belief, language, and socioeconomic background in communities, creatives, and audiences.

Eligibility

- Applications will first be screened in terms of technical and artistic eligibility by the Fund administrators and managers. Proposals which are not considered eligible in terms of the set criteria will not be processed further and will not undergo evaluation.

Evaluation

- Applications deemed compliant and eligible are evaluated against the criteria established in these guidelines.

Management and administration

- Arts Council Malta is responsible for the management of this scheme. All official correspondence, including the online submission of applications or updates to awarded proposals, must be sent to the address indicated in these guidelines.

Mandatory documentation

- Any document(s) needed to support your proposal and aiding the evaluation of your project or activity.

Maximum funding

- There is a ceiling amount of €2,000 per project to be allocated. Amounts awarded will be decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the project.

Public Cultural Organisations

- Public cultural entities falling under the remit of Arts Council Malta, which include Teatru Manoel, Mediterranean Conference Centre, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Fondazzjoni Kreattività, Pjazza Teatru Rjal, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta International Contemporary Arts Space, Festivals Malta, Teatru Malta, Kor Malta, and ŻfinMalta.

3. Eligibility

Proposals will first be screened in terms of technical and access support eligibility. Ineligible proposals in terms of the points below will not be processed further and will not undergo evaluation.

Maximum eligible timeframe to implement the project: 18 months.

3.1 Who can apply?

Beneficiaries who were awarded funding under any of the Funding Schemes 2023 managed by Arts Council Malta.

3.2 Who cannot apply?

The following are not eligible to apply for the Access Support Top-up:

- Applicants who are not in possession of a result notification letter issued by Arts Council Malta confirming allocation of funds through any of the ACM Funding Schemes 2023.

3.3 What expenses can be covered?

This grant may cover up to 100% of the following expenses:

(Maximum award of €2,000 per project)

- Accessibility training, professional development, shadowing;
- Accessible events management;
- Accessibility infrastructure, mobility aids for visitor use;

- Art hives set-ups;
- Assistive technologies, including:
 - Rental of technological equipment;
 - Rental of software licenced for the duration of the project;
 - Purchase of equipment, hardware, software;
- Child care, adult dependent care, senior adult care;
- Communication/experience support (linguistic, cultural, sensory, physical) including:
 - Communication assistant;
 - Production of easy-read text;
 - Speech elements enhancement (unclear speech, dialect);
 - Interpretation, including sign language interpretation;
 - Translation, localisation, revision, editing;
 - Linguistic and/or cultural mediation;
 - Assistive listening devices, transcription, captioning;
 - Audio production, voice-over, dubbing;
 - Audio description, Braille;
 - Multimodality, multisensory tours, tactile exhibits, 3D printing;
- Counselling, therapy services directly related to the project;
- Off-site events, transportation (including persons, exhibits, props);
- Other expenses related to making the project accessible to the recipient of the grant, and/or to wider communities;
- Relaxed performances;
- Support worker, attendant care.

For more information about presenting your budget, refer to our General Budget Guidelines available on <https://www.artscouncilmalta.org/pages/funds-opportunities/schemes-2023/general-budget-guidelines/>.

3.4 What expenses cannot be covered?

- Expenses already covered by public cultural organisations, or another public funding programme/scheme/grant managed or co-managed by Arts Council Malta or by any public agency, government department, or ministry;
- Expenses which are already covered through usual operational budgets (space which is owned by the applicant or the partner/supporting organisation/individual);
- Fees for services provided by public cultural organisations or other public agency, government department, or ministry;
- Funding for the creation or upholding of bursaries, prizes, or scholarships;
- Recoverable VAT, where applicable;
- Reimbursement of salaries or part thereof;
- Retroactive expenses;
- Subsistence, catering, and hospitality.

Beneficiaries are asked to ensure that the expenses in question are over and above the expenses covered by the Funding Schemes 2023 and its equivalent co-funding amount or by any other bridge funding or in-kind support.

3.5 What applications are not eligible?

The following activities are **not** eligible under this Fund:

- Activities of an intrinsically self-sustainable nature;
- Activities which are not directly related to the grant awarded through a Funding Scheme 2023;
- Activities whose objective is fundraising or political propaganda;
- Applications which do not clearly justify that the expense applied for is not usually incurred to carry out an activity or a project related to arts and culture;
- Applications submitted after noon (12:00) of the respective day of deadline;
- Applications submitted by public entities with or without a line vote;
- Applications for expenses related to traditional activities and festivities;
- Applications for expenses related to events held on a regular basis, including annual projects, annual festivals, school/annual shows, regular training programmes;
- Applications for expenses that are not eligible through the Access Support Top-up;
- Incomplete applications. Refer to application checklist in Section 5.1;
- Projects whose duration does not fall within the eligible timeframe.

Any other activity which may be developed outside the scope of the *Access Support Top-up* is not eligible for support.

4. Evaluation

This scheme is administered on a first-come-first-served basis. Applications will be considered eligible only if they meet the requirements stated in sections three and five of these guidelines and regulations.

Arts Council Malta may refuse any application that is deemed to be incongruent with the principles and eligibility criteria outlined in this document.



5. Submitting the application

Follow these steps to apply:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
2. Check whether your proposed idea includes any expenses that can be addressed by an Access Support Top-up.
3. Fill in the below question related to Access Support on the same Funding Scheme application form relating to the project or activity for which the top-up is being sought.

Access Support

Will the project include expenses that are eligible to an Access Support Top-Up?

- Yes No

If yes, kindly justify how the proposal will benefit from this top-up. Please indicate the amount of this cost. When filling in the budget section, kindly include this expense in the budget section. In the Income section, kindly include the amount of Access Support Top-up requested, which may not exceed €2,000.

- a. Include a justification.
- b. State the amount that is required as Access Support Top-up.

When filling in the budget section:

- i. Include the Access Support expense in the expenditure section.
- ii. Add the equivalent total amount requested as Access Support Top-up in the income section.

Please refer to the below image as an example



Expenditure

Fees directly related to project implementation	€ 5000	
Artistic Fees	€ 5000	
Access Top-up - Communication assistant	€ 1000	✗
Access Top-up - Linguistic and/or cultural mediatic	€ 1000	✗

Add another item

Total	€ 12000	
Total cost covered by this fund (up to 100%)	€ 10000	

Income

Amount requested through this Fund	€ 10000	
Access top-up	€ 2000	✗

Add another item

Total Income:	€ 12000	
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4. Fill in all the required fields of the online application form, including the budget, and attach the relevant supporting documentation.
5. Submit the application. You will receive an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive this notification, please contact us on applyforfunds@artscouncil.mt.

In case of difficulty or if you would like to consult us regarding this fund, you can call us on 2334 7230 Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 16:00 or email us on fundinfo@artscouncil.mt.

It is your responsibility to present a complete application form as explained in these guidelines and regulations. To enable us to process and evaluate your application, please present all the necessary information and documentation.

Prior to the application deadline, Arts Council Malta representatives will not be able to check application forms. Following the deadline of the call, it is solely at Arts Council Malta’s discretion to request that applicants provide any missing mandatory documentation.



Upon the submission of the application, applicants accept that, should the application be awarded funding, the name, the project title, a short project description, and the amount awarded can be published by Arts Council Malta.

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the submitted information and supporting documents.

Applications handed in after 12.00 (noon) of the respective deadline cannot be accepted.

5.1 Checklist

In order to be complete, the request for Access Support Top-up must be accompanied by:

- A dated and signed letter of intent or a quotation to support the total amount of Access Support Top-up requested.

6. Communication of results

The result notification from Arts Council Malta will indicate the decision according to the eligibility criteria. Result notifications will be sent together with the result notification for the Funding Scheme 2023 as indicated on page 2 of the respective scheme's guidelines and regulations.

The awarded applications will be published online. Only the names of the successful applications will be published.

No information on the evaluation process will be released before the official result notification. Any form of soliciting will automatically disqualify the application.

All information received will be considered confidential, both during and after the evaluation process. Provisions on data protection and confidentiality for successful events will be included in the grant agreement. All information received by the fund administrators, managers, and evaluators will be considered confidential, both during and after the evaluation process. Provisions on data protection and confidentiality for successful projects will be included in the grant agreement.

7. Project implementation and monitoring

Under no circumstances will we be in a position to increase the grant awarded.

A contract specifying the conditions of the grant will be signed. The Access Support Top-up may only be awarded upon completion of the project within the established timeframe.

100% of the total amount allocated will be processed after the signing of the contract and the submission of the final report by the beneficiary, following approval by the Council.

Please notify the Council immediately if changes affecting the nature of the project take place during implementation. Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received. The Council reserves the right to revise or withhold the final payment if the change in the project is not considered to be in line with the initial proposal, or if the Council is not informed of the changes within a reasonable time.

Please make yourself available for visits and communication with the Council representatives for monitoring purposes, both during the implementation of the project as well as after its completion.

We may revise the final payment if the total expenditure is less than that estimated in the application form.

7.1 Report

After the completion, expiration, or termination of the Funding Scheme 2023-awarded project, you are required to submit a final project report by not later than six (6) weeks from the conclusion of your project.

In this report, you will have the opportunity to communicate and highlight the work carried out, the collaboration and co-creation components, and the achievements supported through the Access Support Top-up. In your report, please include reflections on how the top-up involved added value to the project.

We will provide a template for your report. As part of your report, you are required to submit copies of relevant marketing, publicity or information material developed for the funded project.

You will also be required to present a final updated budget, including all supporting documents.

The support grant agreement will provide information regarding the closing of your project. To enable timely and accurate reports, we suggest that you collect and prepare the relevant documentation along the process of your project implementation.

We may use submitted project material to promote and disseminate good practice.

We may have to recover funds if these are not being used and/or are misused and/or are not used responsibly according to the approved budget.

8. Complaints procedure

We want to foster and support cultural diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to ensure sustainable development and well-being. And we want to be fair. When you believe something went wrong, we want to hear about it so that we can address it and improve how we do things.

Filing a complaint will not affect your chances of receiving support from Arts Council Malta in the future. Confidentiality is really important to us. All complaints you choose to make will be treated with confidentiality.

8.1 Grounds for complaints

As an applicant, you may file a formal complaint regarding procedural anomalies and irregularities linked to the submission process and the evaluation process – in terms of the procedures stipulated in these guidelines and regulations.

We cannot process complaints relating to:

- The Arts Council's or the Government's policies and procedures;
- The merits of the application in terms of the criteria stipulated in these guidelines and regulations.

We can only process complaints filed by the applicants concerning their project.

8.2 Filing a complaint

We would need your formal complaint to be presented as clearly as possible, in writing. Please state the grounds and the reasons for your complaint, providing a detailed explanation and justification supported by relevant documentation or testimonials as to why you believe that the procedure/s stipulated in these guidelines and regulations or in standard good governance rules and regulations governing the public sector went wrong. The decision at the end of the complaint process will be final. Please address your complaint to the Director of Funding and Strategy within five (5) working days of receipt of your funding decision. You will normally receive a reply to your complaint within ten (10) working days.

If after our final response you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, Arts Council Malta will convene a board that will discuss your complaint further. When you approach our complaints procedure, we may need to use information about your project to address your complaint. The decision of the board is final.



Need help?

We're there every step of the way!

Our Creative Brokerage team can help you find the right support and provide feedback on the way you plan to present your application. To make the best of our services, plan ahead and get in touch with us at least four weeks before the submission deadline.

Call us +356 2334 7230

Email us fundinfo@artscouncil.mt

Our office is open 09:00–16:00, Mon–Fri (Malta time)

Guidelines and Regulations updated on 3rd April 2023