

# Apprenticeship Scheme

**Guidelines and Regulations 2024**



ISSUED: JUNE 2024



**ALLOCATIONS**

<b>SESSION BUDGET</b>	<b>MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE AMOUNT PER PROJECT</b>
EUR 234,000	EUR 18,000

<b>CO-FUNDING</b>	<b>DISBURSEMENT</b>
The fund may cover up to 100% of total project costs	Quarterly advance payments of €4,500 each payable to the Host

**TIMEFRAMES**

<b>DEADLINE</b>	<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME</b>
Call for Hosts		
16 July 2024	29 August 2024	01 January 2025 – 31 December 2025
Call for Apprentices		
01 October 2024	14 November 2024	01 January 2025 – 31 December 2025

# 1. Introduction

The Apprenticeship Scheme is one of the tools to address and implement Arts Council Malta's strategy in favour of professional growth across the CCS (Culture and Creative Sectors), an action aligned with the vision outlined in Strategy 2025.

The *Apprenticeship Scheme* is divided in two calls for proposals.

- Call 1 is applicable to sole traders, entities registered with the Malta Business Registry, Voluntary Organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations and Cooperatives registered with the Cooperatives Board.  
Applicants interested in hosting apprentices are invited to submit their proposal. Eligible applicants include operators whose activities require significant creative input and who may be engaged in the below sectors:
  - Cultural and Creative
  - Digital Technologies
  - Design
  - iGaming (excluding betting companies)
  - Crafts
  - Social
- Call 2 is applicable to Creative Practitioners in possession of a minimum qualification of MQF level 5 (applicants in possession of a higher qualification level may also be considered).

This programme reflects the drive towards the further professionalisation of the cultural and creative sector, the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture among creatives and enhancement of technical and vocational skills. It provides opportunities to strengthen the knowledge base and strategies of cultural and creative enterprises. By investing in processes designed to improve the quality that is needed to generate artistic work of excellence, our goal is to support the development of a sustainable creative ecology and to foster further job opportunities in the sector.

The primary objectives of the Scheme are:

- To support the professional development of creative practitioners
- To foster excellence in the fields of art and culture, and the advancement of knowledge and capabilities in such related fields
- To encourage professional intellectual growth
- To encourage creative professionals to continue building their skill sets
- To support enterprises operating within the priority sectors of this scheme and which actively strive towards social, economic and environmental sustainable practices (Green transition).

Other activities not listed above that fulfil the objectives of the scheme may also be considered should sufficient justification be provided.

## 2. Definitions

Activities falling within the cultural and creative sector:

1. Arts (literature, visual arts, music, performing arts, interdisciplinary)
2. Creative Business Services (design, architecture, cultural tourism and cultural services)
3. Heritage (crafts, traditional festivals and celebrations, cultural sites, antiques)
4. Media (publishing and printed material, audio-visuals, including film and video production, film servicing, television, video games, radio, online media).
5. Ancillary services within CCS (any technical activity that is essential to produce artistic work including carpentry and set building, lights and audio engineering etc)

Applicant

- An applicant for the 1<sup>st</sup> call (Call for Hosts) must be a sole trader, an entity registered with the Malta Business Registry (including companies, partnerships, foundations, and organisations/associations), registered cooperatives and voluntary organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations. Whilst an applicant for the 2<sup>nd</sup> call (Call for Apprentices) must be an individual (refer to section 1 and 3.1). Applicants cannot be employees of Arts Council Malta or involved in the management of the *Apprenticeship Scheme*.

Application

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

Beneficiary

- The primary beneficiary is the recipient of the grant, in this case the host. The beneficiary is 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 to the beneficiary.

Cooperatives

- Cooperatives must be registered with the Cooperatives Board. For more information, visit [maltacooperativefederation.coop/coops/bord-tal-koperattivi](http://maltacooperativefederation.coop/coops/bord-tal-koperattivi).

Creative practitioners

- All artistic and creative individuals undergoing formation or who are already practicing within the cultural and creative sectors.

Disbursement of Funds

- The grant will be disbursed as indicated on page 2 of these guidelines and regulations. A cheque payment will be issued on behalf of the Host. The applicant must have an active bank account upon submission of application.

Eligibility

- Applications will first be screened in terms of technical eligibility by the fund administrators and managers. Applications are screened to determine eligibility in terms of Section 3 of these guidelines. Proposals which are not considered eligible shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

#### Evaluation Board

- Arts Council Malta appoints an evaluation board for each call within this scheme. The appointed board may be composed of Arts Council Malta employees and employees of potential hosts.

#### Evaluation

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

#### Individual

- Individuals applying for a grant must be Maltese citizens; or be in possession of a Malta residence permit; or of a Maltese citizenship certificate; or of a Maltese passport.

#### Management and administration:

- Arts Council Malta is responsible for the implementation and 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 (eg. track records, portfolios, artistic CVs, official correspondence, permits or other)

#### Maximum funding:

- There is a ceiling amount of €18,000 that can be allocated per apprenticeship. Amounts awarded will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the application.

#### Public Cultural Organisations

- Public cultural entities which fall under the remit of Arts Council Malta are Teatru Manoel, Mediterranean Conference Centre, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Fondazzjoni Kreattività, Pjazza Teatru Rjal, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta International Contemporary Arts Space, Festivals Malta, National Agency for Performing Arts.

#### Registered entities

- An entity legally established and registered in Malta. Registered entities must be registered with the Malta Business Registry, in accordance with the Companies Act requirements in the case of a company or a partnership, and in accordance with the Civil Code in the case of a Foundation and an Organisation/Association.

#### Voluntary organisation

- An organisation which is legally established and/or publicly registered in Malta, having a statute. Voluntary organisations must be enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations in accordance with the Voluntary Organisations Act requirements (<http://www.maltacvs.org>). The applicant must be a legally authorised representative of the organisation.

## 3. Eligibility

Applications will first be screened in terms of technical eligibility. Ineligible applications in terms of the points below shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

**Maximum eligible timeframe to implement the apprenticeship:** 12 months.

### 3.1 Who can apply?

#### Call for Hosts

Applicants must be Maltese citizens or be in possession of a Malta residence permit, a Maltese citizenship certificate or a Maltese passport.

Applicants may be:

- Sole Traders
- Entities registered with the Malta Business Registry (including limited liability companies, partnerships, foundations, and organisations/associations)
- Registered cooperatives
- Voluntary organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

#### Call for Apprentices

Applicants must be creative practitioners who are Maltese citizens or be in possession of a Malta residence permit, a Maltese citizenship certificate or a Maltese passport.

### 3.2 Who cannot apply?

- Applicants whose profile on the ACM's CRM is not verified due to it being an incomplete profile for not having the below mandatory documents:
  - a copy of your Maltese ID card (including the front and back side) or your Maltese; residence permit or your Maltese citizenship certificate or your Maltese passport;
  - a signed statute in the case of a voluntary organisation.
- Applicants who do not qualify under the definition of applicant for this specific scheme.
- Applicants/activities receiving local public funds through established Government line-votes.
- Beneficiaries who have not honoured previous funding commitments.
- Beneficiaries who did not submit or complete at least one final report related to a previous grant funded by Arts Council Malta within the established timeframes.
- In the case of voluntary organisations, voluntary organisations which are:
  - not enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
  - who have not presented their updated accounts to the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations;
  - which do not have a registered address in the Maltese Islands.

### 3.3 What will the apprenticeship cover?

The Apprenticeship Scheme will cover the remuneration of the apprentices between 01<sup>st</sup> January 2025 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025. The maximum amount disbursed for each apprentice is of €18,000 in a year.

The host will provide the apprentice the following resources:

- Continuous and comprehensive on the job training
- Time Commitment
- Infrastructure
- Mentorship
- Remuneration equivalent to a total of €18,000 over a twelve month period (which is pre-financed by Arts Council Malta)

### 3.4 What applications are not eligible?

- Activities whose objective is fundraising or political propaganda
- Applications for apprenticeships that are conducted, in part or entirely, remotely
- Applications submitted by host organisations or apprentices whose duration does not entirely match the apprenticeship scheme i.e. from 01<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025
- Applications submitted by host organisations or apprentices who are not able to enter a one year commitment to complete the apprentice period
- Applications submitted by host organisations that are not related to Cultural and Creative, Digital Technology, Design, iGaming (not including betting companies), Crafts or the Social sectors
- Applications submitted by apprentices who are not creative practitioners
- Applications for funding the creation or upholding of contests, competitions, bursaries, prizes, or scholarships
- Applications submitted after noon (12:00) of the respective day of deadline
- Applications submitted by public entities with or without a line vote
- Incomplete applications. Refer to Section 5.1 – Checklist.
- Individual modules credited as part of an education course or research as part of established academic programmes
- Initiatives eligible under Festivals Malta, Annual Cultural Activities Scheme, VOPS, National Book Council, Valletta Cultural Agency, Malta Arts Scholarships or any other State-funded programme dedicated to Maltese arts/culture.

Any other activity which may be developed outside the scope of the *Apprenticeship Scheme* is not eligible for support.

Apprentices cannot be matched with hosts who are next of kin.

Aspiring hosts may submit more than one application under this call. However only one apprentice may be hosted by each organisation.

Apprentices may benefit only once through this scheme. Should the scheme re-open again, beneficiaries of the Apprenticeship Scheme 2024 will not be eligible to apply.

## 4. Evaluation

### Call for Hosts

The Evaluation Board will base its decision upon the following criteria:

1. A clear and detailed job description, including the designation title, highlighting how the apprentice's role will contribute to the improvement of current operations. (20 marks)
2. A detailed overview of the host's current operations, including basic information about how the business is run, its clients' portfolio and typical services/products it produces or offers. The overview should also state the business' vision and mission statement. (5 marks)
3. A definition of the skill sets that are directly or indirectly linked to the business and how the apprentices will be exposed to them. (20 marks)
4. An outline of the mentorship and training that the host will be providing to the apprentice including target goals and measurable achievements. (40 marks)
5. A professional set-up that promotes ethical and good practices that guarantee the health and safety of all employees and any third parties engaged with the business and at the workplace. (15 marks)

### Call for Apprentices

The Evaluation Board will base its decision upon the following criteria:

1. Outline the relevance of the proposed host's activities to your interests and competences. (30 marks)
2. Provide a detailed letter or a video outlining the needs and motivation behind your application. This should show an understanding of the long-term professional benefits that come with the apprenticeship experience. (20 marks)
3. Provide the rationale behind the alignment between your skills, background and aspirations and the requirements listed in the job descriptions. (20 marks)
4. Identify the qualities, skills and experience that you will be bringing to the proposed host/s and how these will contribute to the potential host's stated mission. (20 marks)
5. Identify any tangible potential for professional growth, including the acquisition of new skills and know how, that you may benefit through this apprenticeship experience. (10 marks)

## 5. Submitting the application

Follow these steps to apply as a host:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
2. Check whether you are eligible to apply.
3. Fill in the application for the apprenticeship scheme by clicking [here](#).



4. Fill in all the required information from the online application and attach the supporting documentation.
5. Submit the application. You will be receiving an acknowledgement following the submission. If you do not receive such a notification, contact us on [applyforfunds@artscouncil.mt](mailto:applyforfunds@artscouncil.mt).

Follow these steps to apply for an apprentice opportunity:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
2. Check whether you are eligible to apply for this scheme.
3. Press the link that will take you to the online application system.
4. If you do not have a profile, create your profile with Arts Council Malta by clicking on 'Register' and filling in the details.  
Applicants are required to register a profile on the ACM's CRM at least two weeks prior to the deadline of the call.
5. From the open calls section, select the online application for the apprenticeship scheme.
6. Follow the instructions step by step. Fill in all the required information from the online application and attach the supporting documentation.
7. Submit the application. You will receive an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive such a notification, please contact us on [applyforfunds@artscouncil.mt](mailto: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](mailto:fundinfo@artscouncil.mt).

It is your responsibility to present a complete application form as explained in these guidelines and regulations. If you do not present all the necessary information and documentation, your application will not be processed and evaluated.

Prior to the application deadline, Arts Council Malta representatives will not be checking your application forms. It is solely at the Council discretion to request that applicants provide any missing mandatory documentation following the call deadline.

Upon the submission of the application, applicants accept that should the application be awarded funding, the name and the amount awarded can be published by the Council.

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the submitted information, including documentation in support of the proposal.

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

## 5.1 Checklist

In order to be complete applications must be accompanied by:

Host:

- A copy of the VAT certificate
- A portfolio
- A complete application including the description of the resources that will be made available to the apprentice

- A job description of the role that will be supported through the apprenticeship scheme (this will be made available to Apprentices when selecting their hosts)
- A signed commitment letter stating the interest in hosting and mentoring an apprentice from the 01<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025
- The CV of the mentor

#### Apprentice:

- A copy of the VAT registration certificate (if applicable)
- A detailed CV
- A portfolio of work highlighting research interests and professional aspirations
- A most recent JobsPlus Employment History document (this must be issued in 2024)
- Motivation letter or video explaining why they would like to be considered for the apprenticeship scheme.  
(In the case of a video this must not exceed 3 minutes duration and it needs to be open to be viewed without the need of a password. Audiovisuals up to 5MB may be uploaded directly in the application form. In the case of larger files these may be provided as a link)
- Reference letter(s) by the creative practitioner's past tutor(s) or mentor(s) as applicable

## 6. Evaluation process

This scheme is competitive and will be evaluated by a panel of sectorial experts, including the Hosts, according to established criteria.

As specified above, each criterion is allocated a specific number of marks. In order to be considered for funding, projects have to obtain an average of at least 60 marks.

Nevertheless, the evaluation session and funding decisions depend on the quality of the submitted proposals and on the availability of the funds. Therefore, obtaining 60 marks or more does not automatically mean that you will be awarded the funds. The Evaluators' Board may decide not to allocate the total funds available for a particular call if the proposed projects do not reach the required level in terms of the fund criteria.

Eligible applications will be assessed by an evaluation team selected by the Arts Council Malta on the basis of their professional experience. The Council will select evaluators based on their independent and professional experience. The evaluators will present an assessment on each of the proposed projects, indicating the relevant ratings awarded.

### 6.1 Interview session

The aim of the interview session is to provide an opportunity for applicant apprentices to make a case for their proposal to the evaluation board. The grant applications would already have been reviewed by the evaluation board and the fund manager before the interview.

## 6.2 Communication of results

On the day indicated on page 2, you will receive your result notification from Arts Council Malta. Together with the covering letter, we will also attach a copy of the evaluation form, indicating the reasons and average marks leading to the Evaluators' Board's decision, according to the fund criteria.

The order of classification of the projects, according to the marks allocated by the evaluators, will be published online. Only the names of the successful projects will be published; in the case of projects which have not been awarded any funds, only their reference number will be published.

If you have any difficulties concerning your results, you should email us on [fundinfo@artscouncil.mt](mailto:fundinfo@artscouncil.mt) within five (5) days of receiving your funding decision.

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

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. Implementation and monitoring

**Under no circumstances will the Council be in a position to increase the amount paid to the hosts in support of the apprentices.**

A contract specifying the conditions of the fund will be signed. The payments may only be processed upon receipt of a quarterly mentor report and a quarterly reflective journal.

The first payment will be processed after the signing of the contract. The remaining payments will be disbursed after the submission of the quarterly reports.

The beneficiaries must use the Council's official logo on all related material and specify that the opportunity was supported by the grant as follows: **Supported by Arts Council Malta**, in all marketing, PR and printed material. The grant received must be used solely for the purpose for which it was awarded, in line with the submitted proposal and the contract.

Beneficiaries must notify the Council immediately if changes affecting the nature of the agreement take place during implementation. Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received. The Council reserves the right to revise or withhold the consecutive payment(s) if the change in the agreement is not considered to be in line with the proposal, or if the Council is not informed of the changes within a reasonable time.

Beneficiaries must make themselves available for visits and communication with the Council's representatives for monitoring purposes both during the implementation of the apprentice as well as after its completion.

When the conditions of the apprenticeship are not fulfilled the Council also reserves the right to revise and/or terminate the agreement.

## 7.1 Report

At the end of each quarter, the apprentice will be required to submit a reflective journal highlighting the work carried out and the highlights and/or challenges of the apprenticeship. The mentor will be required to submit quarterly reports. Arts Council Malta will provide a template of the required reports that will be filled in online on the ACM's CRM.

The Council retains the right to make use of submitted material.

The Council retains the right to recover or stop payments in case the funds are not being used and/or are misused and/or are not used according to the submitted proposal.

## 8. Complaints procedure

Filing a complaint will not affect your chances of receiving support from Arts Council Malta in the future. All complaints will be treated with confidentiality.

### 8.1 Grounds for complaints

Applicants can make a complaint regarding procedural anomalies and irregularities during the submission and evaluation process in terms of the procedures stipulated in these guidelines and regulations. Complaints cannot be made concerning:

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

Only applicants may file complaints concerning their project.

### 8.2 Filing a complaint

Complaints must be made in writing and must be as clear as possible. The complaint must state the grounds and the reasons for the complaint, providing a detailed explanation and justification



supported by relevant documentation or testimonials as to why the complainant deems that irregularities were committed in the procedure/s stipulated in these guidelines and regulations or in standard good governance rules and regulations governing the public sector. The decision at the end of the complaint process shall be final. Complaints need to be made to the Director of Funding and Strategy, Arts Council Malta on [fundinfo@artscouncil.mt](mailto:fundinfo@artscouncil.mt) 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.

In case you are not satisfied with the reply, the Council will convene a board that will discuss your complaint further. If you approach our complaints procedure, then you are accepting that we can use information about your project to address the complaint. The decision of the board is final.

## Need advice?

Arts Council Malta offers pre-submission consultation services to help secure support for your project. We are there every step of the way. We can help you determine whether the core concept and profile of your project are in line with the targeted support mechanism and provide feedback on the way you plan to present your project. Plan and get in touch with us at least four weeks before the submission deadline, to make the best of our services.

You are welcome to call us on 2334 7230 on weekdays between 09:00 and 16:00 or to send us an email on [fundinfo@artscouncil.mt](mailto:fundinfo@artscouncil.mt).

**Guidelines updated on 14th May 2024**