

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

Guidelines and Regulations



Time frames and Allocations

Deadlines in 2020	Result notification	Project implementation	Project duration
21 st January 2020	02 nd March 2020	03 rd March 2020 03 rd March 2021	Up till 8 months
22 nd June 2020	03 rd August 2020	04 th August 2020 04 th August 2021	Up till 8 months
14 th October 2020	01 st December 2020	02 nd December 2020 02 nd December 2021	Up till 8 months

Maximum grant	Session Budget
€2,000	€18,000

Definitions

Applicant

- Applicant is the individual applying for the grant or the legal representative of the organisation applying for the grant.

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 beneficiary is the recipient of the grant. The beneficiary is responsible for the implementation of the proposal supported by the Professional Development Grant.

Eligibility

- Applications will first be screened in terms of eligibility. Proposals that are not considered eligible in terms of the set eligibility criteria shall not be processed further and shall not undergo evaluation.

Evaluator

- Arts Council Malta shall appoint an evaluation team made up of independent evaluators selected from the pool of evaluators.

Group

- A number of persons with or without legal personality may form a group. One of the persons involved must take the leading role and have the main legal responsibility for managing the project and the grant. This person must be a Maltese citizen or be in possession of a Maltese residence permit or of a Maltese citizenship certificate or of a Maltese passport.

Individual

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

Creative Professionals

- As outlined in the Create2020 strategy, creative professionals include all artistic and creative individuals professionally active in the cultural and creative sectors. According to the Arts Council Malta Act their activities are identified as a *set of culturally significant, knowledge based activities, born of creativity and cultural capital that encompass the cycles of creation, production, distribution and preservation of cultural and creative goods and services, and which have the potential to generate cultural and social development, economic growth and employment.*

Students

- Students active in the cultural and creative sectors and enrolled in an advanced educational programme (diploma or above), focusing on one of the cultural and creative sectors.

1. What is the Professional Development Grant?

The Professional Development Grant is one of our tools to address and implement Arts Council Malta's goals outlined in our Create2020 Strategy, with a particular focus on:

Nurturing creative potential and support its development into professional activity

The grant programme forms part of the National Fund for Artistic Excellence.

The Professional Development Grant supports the continuous professional development of Maltese or Malta-based artists and cultural operators who are active in the cultural and creative sectors and seeking to engage in short term professional training to improve their skills and advance their specialization. The programme is also open to students engaged in the cultural and creative sectors, as long as the proposed training programme is not substituting or subsidising any components related to the full time studies.

The programme reflects the drive towards further professionalisation of the sectors and the promotion of an entrepreneurial culture among creative professionals. It provides opportunities that can 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, providing value added and job opportunities in the sector.

2. What are the objectives of the Grant?

The objectives of this grant are:

- To support the continuous professional development of artists and cultural operators in exploring, developing skills, building networks and engaging in national and international collaborations.
- To foster excellence in the fields of art and culture, and the advancement of knowledge and capabilities in such related fields.
- To invest in training and increase opportunities for artists and creative professionals.
- To encourage professional intellectual growth and productivity
- To encourage creative professionals to continue building their skill sets and to engage in platforms both on a national and international level.

3. Who can apply for the Professional Development Grant?

Applications are accepted from creative professionals engaged economically, full-time or part-time equivalent, in one of the cultural and creative sectors. Applications may also be submitted by groups and students as identified in the definitions of this scheme. Eligible applicants should be aged 18 and over, students and artists below the age of 18 should apply through the Young Talent Fund.

In case of applications by students, a recommendation letter from the current tutor needs to be presented at application stage.

4. What will this grant scheme support?

The Grant may support up to 100% of the costs. The Grant may cover one or more of the following activities that may take place in Malta and/or in other countries:

- ▶ Stand-alone and short courses (which are not part of a diploma or module).
- ▶ Conferences in Malta, applicants who would like to attend conferences abroad should apply through the Cultural Export Fund.
- ▶ Mentoring programmes
- ▶ Job shadowing
- ▶ Apprenticeships
- ▶ Masterclasses or workshops
- ▶ Work placements
- ▶ Internships
- ▶ Train the trainer programmes
- ▶ Courses in cultural leadership, cultural management and training in technical fields such as stage management, stage lighting, sound and other related courses.

4.1 Duration

The Professional Development Grant covers projects having a maximum duration of eight (8) months.

4.2 Costs

100% of eligible costs not exceeding EUR 2000. Eligible costs are related exclusively to the execution of the proposed activity including:

- Course fees
- Professional fees (in the case of mentoring services).
- Insurance and VisaTravel
- Standard accommodation

An additional EUR 1,000 may be allocated for travel support and assistance to disabled artists.

The budget must also include amounts relating to secured, unsecured and other planned revenues derived for the project. The unsecured amount requested from the fund must be quantified and allocated as the 'Amount Requested' from the fund. You may request up to 100% of the costs related to your project.

N.B. The budget must include both income and expenditure.

Kindly refer to the budget guidelines.

Applicants can submit more than one application under the same call, however only one of the applications can be funded per session.

4.3 Official documentation in support of the budget

In order to support your proposal, provide copies of any relevant quotations that can give an indication of estimated costs. Whenever quotations cannot be supplied, you can provide a breakdown of estimated costs based on standard expenditure.

Other sources of funding and sponsorships (including sponsorships in kind) must be supported by relevant documentation.

4.4 Ineligible

- Training programmes required to renew professional licenses or accreditations
- Full time or part time diplomas and degrees or modules in part fulfillment of academic awards.
- Part payment of internships, work placements or apprenticeships that are already funded through other public or private initiatives.
- Training which is not directly related to the arts
- Per diems
- Materials
- Courses which, taken as a whole, have a duration longer than eight (8) months
- Expenses already covered by public cultural organisations, or another public funding programme managed or co-managed by Arts Council Malta or other public agency, government department or Ministry
- Training and courses that have already started.
- Courses which would have already taken place before the result is notified to applicants

- Artistic fees (that include commission or personal remuneration of any sort)
- Incomplete applications as explained under Mandatory Documentation
- Mobility costs for chaperones. Kindly see footnote at the bottom of this page¹

5. Mandatory documentation

The documents stipulated in the following list are **mandatory** and required for the **pre-evaluation screening**. Omission to present any of these documents will render the application **ineligible**.

- a) A complete application form, including the budget breakdown and the supporting quotes and documentation.
- b) A copy of the applicant's Maltese ID card [both sides included] or Maltese residence permit or Maltese citizenship certificate or Maltese passport.
- c) An acceptance letter or proof of confirmation or commitment of the proposed programme, training or course. If an acceptance letter or proof is not available due to reasons which are beyond the control of the applicant, the application must clearly outline the reason for this omitted information and provide details on when such information would be made available to the applicant and to Arts Council Malta.
- d) In the case of applications by students, a recommendation letter by a tutor, relevant to the course or programme being proposed.
- e) In the case of applications by applicants aged 14 to 16, a letter by the parent/ guardian endorsing the application and providing consent to the applicant to submit the proposal.

Kindly note that it is your responsibility to submit all the necessary documentation, as outlined above, before the indicated deadline. **Arts Council Malta representatives will not be checking your application forms prior to application.**

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

A decision on funding will be made on the strength of the submitted information. Pre-payments such as deposits for or the full course fees made by applicants do not influence the evaluation process. Each eligible application is then evaluated against the criteria established in these Guidelines and Regulation.

¹ In case of projects involving mobility of disabled artists, evaluators might consider expenses for chaperones on a case by case basis.

6. What are the criteria of the grant?

Each eligible application is assessed against the following evaluation criteria:

- The level of opportunity for **professional development** in terms of skills improvement and advancement in specialisation;
- The **value** of the learning platform and of the training opportunity;
- The national or international **engagement**, including the benefit of the wider arts and creative community;
- The professional and financial **management** of the project.

The following are the criteria which will be used by the evaluators to assess the proposals.

Criterion 1: Professional Development (30points)

- a) What are your training needs vis-à-vis the current stage in your career and other courses and programmes you may have already engaged in?
- b) How relevant is the proposed training/course to your professional development?
- c) Will the proposed learning outcomes improve and develop your skills?

Criterion 2: Value and Merit of Learning Platform (30points)

- a) What are the merits of the learning platform you selected?
- b) How will the method of delivery and professionals engaged in the programme (tutors, mentors etc) sufficiently support your training needs?

N.B. Kindly provide clear confirmation of course admission or acceptance. In case that confirmation has not been secured by time of application, indicate why.

Criterion 3: Artistic Engagement and Networking (20 points)

- a) How will this programme provide you with further opportunities for collaborations, dialogue and exploration on a national/international level?

Criterion 4: Management and Finance (20 points)

- a) How well-planned and realistic is the budget?
- b) Does the application provide sufficient evidence of the applicant's ability to manage the activity (including financial management and co-funding, if necessary) responsibly and successfully?

To make a stronger case in terms of this criterion, you are encouraged to provide quotations to substantiate the budget items (please refer to the budget template in the application form).

7. How to apply

Follow these steps to apply

1. If you have not done so already, create your profile with Arts Council Malta by clicking on Register and filling in the details.
2. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
3. Check whether your proposed idea can be addressed by this fund.
4. Click on the 'Apply for the fund' button on the fund's page and start the online application process.
5. Follow the online application step by step. Fill in all the required information from the online application including the budget and attach the supporting documentation.
6. Submit the application. You should be receiving an automatic acknowledgement by the system. If you do not receive such a notification, contact us on applyforfunds@artscouncilmalta.org.

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@artscouncilmalta.org.

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, then your application will not be processed and evaluated.

8. The Evaluation Process

This fund is competitive and will be evaluated according to established criteria.

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

Nevertheless, the evaluation session and funding decisions depend on the competition level and on the availability of the funds. Thus obtaining 60 marks or more does not automatically mean that you will be receiving the funds. The Evaluation 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.

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.

The Evaluation Board might require clarifications from your end during the evaluation sessions; however, this does not mean that your project will necessarily be funded. All correspondence will be sent by the Arts Council's Fund Administrator.

9. What happens after you submit your application form?

Proposals will first be screened in terms of eligibility. Proposals which are not eligible in terms of the procedure stipulated by these guidelines will not be processed further and will not undergo evaluation.

After you submit your application form at Arts Council Malta, an independent evaluation board will evaluate your project. On the day indicated above, 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 marks leading to the Evaluation Board's decision, according to the fund criteria.

If you have any further difficulties concerning your results, email us on fundinfo@artscouncilmalta.org within five (5) days of receiving your funding decision.

10. Communication of results

The results of each respective call (successful, unsuccessful or ineligible) will be issued on the dates indicated in the submission timeframes. 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 Administrator, Fund Manager 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.

11. Complaints procedure

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

11.1 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.

11.2 Filing a complaint Stage 1

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 of Arts Council Malta 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, Arts Council Malta 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.

11.3 Filing a complaint Stage 2

If the issue has not been resolved through Stage 1, you can refer your complaint to the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman provides an independent and unbiased service between the Government and its institutions and the public. He or she has the power to decide whether or not to investigate a complaint.

If the Ombudsman concludes that your complaint is justified, he or she will make recommendations for a satisfactory remedy, and on how to prevent a similar situation in the future.

The Ombudsman works according to his or her own guidelines and procedures, and we recommend that you acquaint yourself with these. They can be found at: www.ombudsman.org.mt. The Ombudsman cannot reverse funding decisions or make changes to Arts Council Malta's legal responsibilities and policies on awarding grant.

12. Project implementation and monitoring

If your application is approved and funded, you will be requested to sign a contract specifying the conditions of the fund at Arts Council Malta. When accepting the grant, applicants accept that their name, the project title and the amount awarded can be published by Arts Council Malta.

70% of the total amount allocated by the Evaluation Board will be processed after the signing of the contract. The other 30% will be given following approval of the report by Arts Council Malta.

The beneficiaries must use the fund's logo on all related material and specify that the project was supported by the fund – 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 Arts Council Malta immediately if changes affecting the nature of the project take place during implementation. **Changes cannot be implemented unless approval is received.** Arts Council Malta reserves the right to request a reimbursement of any funds disbursed should the approved project be withdrawn by the applicant or by the training provider, even if a conditional or unconditional offer had been made to the applicant by the training provider before or after the submission of the application. Arts Council Malta also 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.

For monitoring purposes beneficiaries are to make themselves available to any visits or communication from an Arts Council Malta representatives during the implementation of the project and afterwards.

Arts Council Malta also reserves the right to revise the final payment if the total expenditure is less than that estimated in the application form.

13. Report

At the end of your project, you will be required to submit a detailed report invoices, and any photographic and audiovisual material, highlighting the work carried out and the achievements of the project, by not later than six weeks after your project is concluded. Together with this report, beneficiaries must submit copies of any relevant marketing, publicity or information material developed for the funded project, including visual documentation.

You also have to present a final budget together with all supporting documents. Arts Council Malta retains the right to make use of submitted project material.

The information provided will be evaluated by Arts Council Malta officials. Arts Council Malta reserves the right to ask for the retraction of funds in case of anomalies or lack of data on any of the aforementioned requirements.

Arts Council Malta retains the right to recover funds in case these are not being used and/or are misused and/or are not used according to the submitted budget.

Contact us

For more information, you may call us on **2334 7230**.

or send us an email on **fundinfo@artscouncilmalta.org**

Guidelines updated on 1st November 2019.