

Legal and Finance Grant

Guidelines and Regulations 2026



ISSUED: JULY 2026

ALLOCATIONS

SESSION BUDGET	MAXIMUM ELIGIBLE AMOUNT PER PROJECT
One Hundred Thousand Euros (€100,000)	Three Thousand Euros (€3,000)

CO-FUNDING	DISBURSEMENT
The fund may cover up to one hundred percent (100%) of total project costs	100% upon signing of grant agreement, the submission of the beneficiary's final report, and its approval by the Council

TIMEFRAMES

DEADLINE	RESULTS	ELIGIBLE TIMEFRAME
The second (2 nd) of September 2026	Within twenty (20) working days from the submission of a complete application	By no earlier than the thirteenth (13 th) of July 2026, and by no later than the thirty-first (31 st) day of December 2027, inclusive of both dates

1. Introduction

The Legal and Finance Grant is one of our tools to address and implement Arts Council Malta's ongoing strategy, with a focus on nurturing creative potential and supporting its development into professional activity.

The grant aims at giving a support structure that encourages creative practitioners and creative organisations to respond to professional, structural, and compliance needs within the sector. The Legal and Finance Grant enables beneficiaries to sustain the development of their practice. The grant will facilitate access to qualified legal and financial expertise, support artists in navigating contracts, taxation, and regulatory frameworks, and prevent or mitigate professional disputes and financial mismanagement while contributing to a more resilient cultural ecosystem

The Legal and Finance Grant is a one-time grant designed to provide support for capacity-building. The grant aims to:

- strengthen fair working conditions in the cultural sector;
- improve legal literacy and contractual security;
- enhance financial sustainability and compliance;
- reduce professional risk associated with artistic practice.

Applicants are expected to give due consideration, as appropriate, to the main principles outlined in the [Charter for the Status of the Artist](#) when submitting their proposal to ensure fair and just working conditions for artists. These include the right to artistic freedom, improved accessibility, formal/informal/non-formal skill recognition, decent socio-economic conditions, non-discrimination and equity, ethical considerations, and adherence to intellectual property rights and international labour law. The Charter for the Status of the Artist is meant to provide a dynamic frame of reference for any legislation, policy, or initiative which directly or indirectly impacts artists and cultural and creative sectors, ensuring that any action is aligned with the ultimate long-term vision of elevating the status of artists in Malta in line with their tangible value to society.

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, audiovisuals, including film and video production, film servicing, television, video games, radio, online media).

Applicant

- An applicant may be a creative practitioner, or any entity with separate legal personality, who has not benefitted from ACM funding schemes in the past three years (2024-2026) (refer to

section 3.1). Applicants cannot be employees of Arts Council Malta or be involved in the management of the Legal and Finance Grant.

Application

- An application is a submission, inclusive of all mandatory documents and any annexes to the application form made by an eligible applicant (refer to section 5.1).

Beneficiary

- The beneficiary is the recipient of the grant. The beneficiary is responsible for the implementation of the proposal supported by the scheme. The identity, or legal nature of, the beneficiary of the grant may not be changed throughout the duration of the funded project 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.

Cooperatives

- Cooperatives must be registered with the Koperattivi Board. For more information visit <https://maltacooperativefederation.coop/coops/bord-tal-koperattivi>.

Creative practitioner

- Individuals active in a creative practice in the cultural and creative sectors.

Disbursement of Funds

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

Eligibility

- Applications will first be screened in terms of technical and artistic 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 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 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 proposal (e.g. track record, portfolio, artistic CV, official correspondence confirming rental of space, permits, or other). Refer to Section 5.1 for a detailed list.

Maximum funding:

- There is a ceiling amount of three thousand euros (€3,000) per project to be allocated. Amounts awarded will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on the proposal.

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, Jesuits' Church Foundation, De Valette Chamber Orchestra, Festivals Malta, and 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.

Single undertaking

- Includes all enterprises having at least one of the following relationships with each other:
 - a. One enterprise has a majority of the shareholders' or members' voting rights in another enterprise;
 - b. One enterprise has the right to appoint or remove a majority of the members of the administrative, management or supervisory body of another enterprise;
 - c. One enterprise has the right to exercise a dominant influence over another enterprise pursuant to a contract entered into with that enterprise or pursuant to a provision in its memorandum or articles of association;
 - d. One enterprise, which is a shareholder in or member of another enterprise, controls alone, pursuant to an agreement with other shareholders in or members of that enterprise, a majority of shareholders' or members' voting rights in that enterprise.

Enterprises having any of the relationships referred to in points (a) to (d) through one or more other enterprises shall also be considered to be a single undertaking.

Undertaking

- An undertaking is defined as an entity engaged in an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU (i.e. any activity consisting in offering goods and services on a market), regardless of its legal status and the way in which it is financed. The classification of a particular entity as an undertaking depends entirely on the nature of its activities. The application of the state aid rules does not depend on whether the entity is set up to generate profits. Non-profit entities can also offer goods and services on a market. Where this is not the case, non-profit entities remain outside the scope of state aid. Furthermore, the classification of an entity as an undertaking is always relative to a specific activity. An entity that carries out both economic and non-economic activities is to be regarded as an undertaking only with regard to the former.

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

Proposals will first be screened in terms of 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: No more than seventeen (17) consecutive months.

3.1 Who can apply?

The Legal and Finance Grant is open to applicants who have not benefitted from ACM funding Schemes in the past three years (2024 – 2026). Applicants must be Maltese citizens, or be in possession of a Maltese residence permit, a Maltese citizenship certificate, or a Maltese passport.

Applicants must fall within one of the following categories:

- Creative professionals/individual artists;
- Entities registered with the Malta Business Registry (including companies, partnerships, foundations, and organisations/associations);
- Registered cooperatives;
- Voluntary organisations enrolled with the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU.

The grant is open to applicants that are deemed as undertakings and that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU. Assistance will be awarded in line with the *de minimis* regulation. Kindly refer to Section 9 of these guidelines for additional information.

3.2 Who cannot apply?

- Applicants whose profile 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
- Applicants who do not qualify under the definition of applicant for this specific scheme;
- Applicants who benefitted from ACM funding schemes in the past three years;
- Activities receiving local public funds through established government line-votes;
- 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;
- Beneficiaries who have not honoured previous funding commitments.

3.3 What costs can be covered¹

This grant may cover up to one hundred percent (100%) of the following costs (up to a maximum of three thousand euros (€3,000) per proposal, whichever is the lowest).

The eligible expenses need to be directly related with an artistic product,

The following eligible expenses shall be covered:

- Fees for legal services – such as contract drafting, review, or negotiation, intellectual property (IP) advice and rights management, disputes related to artistic work (pre-litigation stage only) employment or freelance contractual issues;
- Fees for financial services – such as accounting and tax advisory services, financial planning related to artistic practice, compliance with national or international fiscal obligations;
- Regulatory & Administrative Support – such as visa/work permit legal support (where relevant to artistic work), insurance, and legal registration requirements.

Any expense claimed as an eligible expense under the grant, in respect of the above services, will be eligible only to the extent that the relevant services are provided by a fully qualified professional who is duly authorised to provide such services and who holds, and maintains in full force and effect, all warrants, licences, registrations, permits, approvals, and other authorisations required under applicable law for the lawful provision of those services.

The grant recipient must, upon request by Arts Council Malta, provide satisfactory evidence of the relevant professional qualifications and of any such warrants, licences, registrations, permits, approvals, or other authorisations. Any expense relating to services provided by a person who does not meet the requirements of this clause will not be eligible for reimbursement or funding under the grant.

For more information about presenting your budget, refer to our General Budget Guidelines available on <https://artscouncilmalta.gov.mt/funding-and-grants/general-budget-guidelines/>.

3.4 What costs cannot be covered?

Any costs other than those indicated in Section 3.3 shall not be covered.

Ineligible costs include:

- Applicant's own artistic fees;
- Costs already covered by public cultural organisations, or another public funding programme/scheme managed or co-managed by Arts Council Malta or other public agency, government department or ministry;

¹ All costs will be considered only if these resources are not already covered/cannot be covered by the applicants or supporting/partner organisations.

- Costs not directly linked to professional artistic and/or cultural activity;
- Costs which are already covered through usual operational budgets;
- Fees for services provided by public cultural organisations or other public agency, government department, or ministry;
- Litigation costs beyond initial legal consultation;
- Payment of legal or administrative fines and penalties (including both principal and interest amounts), as well as debts owed to third parties;
- Reimbursement of salaries or part of;
- Retroactive costs;
- Subsistence, catering, and hospitality.

3.5 What applications are not eligible?

- Activities that are not related to culture, arts, and the creative industries;
- Activities whose objective is fundraising or political propaganda;
- 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 and/or culture;
- Projects that would have already started and/or taken place before the result is notified to applicant(s);
- Projects whose duration does not entirely fall within the eligible timeframe.

Any other activity which may be developed outside the scope of the *Legal and Finance Grant* is not eligible for support.

Applicants may benefit from only (1) one application per session.

4. Evaluation

The evaluation will be based upon the following criteria:

4.1 Criterion 1: Relevance and Justification of Need (40 marks)

The following questions are to be addressed in not more than 500 words:

- How clearly does the applicant identify the legal and/or financial need? (20 marks)
- To what extent is the proposed activity necessary and appropriate to address this need? (10 marks)

- How directly does the legal and/or financial need relate to the applicant's professional artistic practice? (10 marks)

4.2 Criterion 2: Expected Outcomes and Professional Benefit (20 marks)

The following questions are to be addressed in not more than 300 words:

- To what extent will the proposed activity lead to tangible improvements in the applicant's professional situation? (10 marks)
- Will the proposed activity contribute to greater financial stability, legal clarity, or risk mitigation? (10 marks)

4.3 Criterion 3: Applicant Profile and Practice (20 marks)

The following questions are to be addressed in not more than 300 words:

- Does the applicant demonstrate an active and ongoing artistic and/or cultural practice? (10 marks)
- Is there evidence of professional engagement and commitment in their field? (10 marks)

4.4 Criterion 4: Feasibility and Value for Money (20 marks)

The following questions are to be addressed in not more than 300 words:

- Are the proposed services appropriate and proportionate to the identified need? (10 marks)
- Are the costs justified and realistic? Does the applicant provide the necessary quotations to support the requested amount? (5 marks)
- Is the activity deliverable within the proposed timeframe? (5 marks)

5. Submitting the application

Follow these steps to apply:

1. Read these guidelines and regulations very carefully.
2. Check whether your proposed idea can be addressed by 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.
5. From the open calls section, select the online application for the scheme you intend to apply. Make sure that you are choosing the application for the correct Category. Refer to Section 3.1.
6. Follow the instructions step by step. Fill in all the required information from the online application including the budget and attach the supporting documentation.
7. 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@artscouncil.mt.

Applicants are required to register a profile on the ACM's CRM at least two weeks prior to the deadline of the call. The registration of such a profile later than the aforementioned two-week period may lead Arts Council Malta to decide to not process or evaluate the application.

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. 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's 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, the project title, 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:

- A copy of the applicant's VAT certificate of registration, if applicable;
- A copy of a document issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Revenue showing that the applicant is a taxpayer in Malta;
- A filled in and signed *de minimis* declaration form;
- Applicant biography/artistic CV to be included in the applicant profile;
- If applicable, proof of the organisation's/company's legal registration;
- If applicable, a most recent Good Standing Certificate of Registration. This document is renewed annually by the Malta Business Registry and is proof of compliance;
- Quotations for expenses requested through the proposal;
- Media showing the artistic and/or cultural activity of the applicant;
- Samples of work;
- An audio or audiovisual file not exceeding 5 minutes in which the applicant provides a short description, a rationale, and/or motivation for submitting this proposal.

6. Evaluation process

This scheme is managed on a first-come-first-served basis and is non-competitive. It will be evaluated according to established criteria.

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

Nevertheless, the evaluation session and funding decisions depend on the quality of the submitted proposals as well as the availability of the funds. Therefore, obtaining 60 marks or more does not automatically mean that your project proposal has been successful. The evaluation

board may decide not to allocate the total funds available for a particular call if the proposed proposals do not reach the required level in terms of the scheme criteria.

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

6.1 Communication of results

On the day indicated on page 2 ('Results'), you will receive your result notification from Arts Council Malta.

The names of the successful proposals will be published; in the case of proposals 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 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. Project implementation and monitoring

Under no circumstances will the Council increase the grant awarded.

A contract specifying the conditions of the fund will be signed between Arts Council Malta and the beneficiary. The grant may only be awarded upon completion of the above process within the established timeframe.

Hundred per cent (100%) of the total amount allocated by the Arts Council Malta will be processed after the signing of the contract, the submission of the final report by the beneficiary, and following approval by the Council.

The beneficiaries must use the Council's official logo on all related material and specify that the project 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 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.

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

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

7.1 Report

At the end of your project, you will be required to submit a detailed report highlighting the work carried out and the project achievements, by not later than six (6) weeks after your project is concluded. Arts Council Malta will provide a template for your report. If relevant, together with this report, beneficiaries must submit copies of any relevant marketing, publicity, or information material developed for the funded project. Beneficiaries will also be requested to submit evidence of the research process, which includes visual documentation, blogs, and other documentation.

You will also be required to present a final updated budget together with all supporting documents.

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

The Council 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.

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 the 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 will be final. Complaints need to be made to the Director of Funding, Arts Council Malta on 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.

9. State aid rules applicable for undertakings that carry out an economic activity within the meaning of Article 107 TFEU

The scheme will be implemented in line with the provisions of Commission Regulation (EU) 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid.

This regulation applies to aid granted to undertakings in all sectors, with the exception of:

1. aid granted to undertakings active in the primary production of fishery and aquaculture products;
2. aid granted to undertakings active in the processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products, where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of price or quantity of products purchased or put on the market;
3. aid granted to undertakings active in the primary production of agricultural products;
4. aid granted to undertakings active in the processing and marketing of agricultural products, in one of the following cases:
 - a. where the amount of the aid is fixed on the basis of the price or quantity of such products purchased from primary producers or put on the market by the undertakings concerned;
 - b. where the aid is conditional on being partly or entirely passed on to primary producers;
5. aid granted to export-related activities towards third countries or member states, namely aid directly linked to the quantities exported, the establishment and operation of a distribution network or other current expenditure linked to the export activity;
6. aid contingent upon the use of domestic goods and services over imported goods and services.

The total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking shall not exceed the amount of €300,000 over any period of three years. This period is assessed on a rolling basis.

This maximum threshold would include all state aid granted under this aid scheme and any other state aid measure implemented in line with the *de minimis* rule including that received from any entity

other than Arts Council Malta. Any *de minimis* aid received in excess of the established threshold will have to be recovered, with interest, from the undertaking receiving the aid.

The rules on cumulation of aid as outlined in Article 5 of the *de minimis* regulation will be respected.

Applicants are to submit a *de minimis* declaration indicating any other *de minimis* aid received and/or applied for during the previous three years. This will ensure that the total amount of *de minimis* aid granted to a single undertaking under the *de minimis* rule will not exceed the *de minimis* threshold over the applicable three-year period.

Should a successful applicant not be eligible to receive *de minimis* aid, the said applicant will be deemed ineligible and the next ranked applicant will be awarded.

In line with the *de minimis* regulation, records regarding *de minimis* aid shall be maintained for 10 years from the date on which the aid under the scheme is granted.

Publication in Central Register

In line with Article 6(1) of the *de minimis* regulation, as of 1 January 2026, information on *de minimis* aid granted under this scheme shall be made publicly available in a central register.

The following information shall be made public:

- the identification of the beneficiary;
- the aid amount;
- the granting date;
- the aid instrument; and
- the sector involved on the basis of the statistical classification of economic activities in the Union ('NACE classification').

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 ahead and get in touch with us at least four weeks before the submission deadline to make the best use 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.

Guidelines updated on the 30th of June 2026