Visual Artist and Craft Maker Awards Bursaries 2020/21

#VACMAScotland

Guidance for applicants

CREATIVE SCOTLAND

ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Awarding funds from THE NATIONAL LOTTERY®

Background

Creative Scotland works in partnership to offer small grants to visual artists and craft makers for their creative development at all stages of their career. This guidance document is designed to support applicants and covers all the criteria and process but please use your local partner's application form to apply. For a full list of partners and schemes please visit **www.creativescotland.com/vacma**

These awards are supported by Creative Scotland through funding from the National Lottery in partnership with a range of local partners across Scotland. The schemes are managed locally by these partners.

Funds available

In place of usual VACMA awards, this year fixed bursaries are available in recognition of the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on individual artists and makers. The scheme acknowledges the limitations placed on individual practices and the opportunities that are currently available. The VACMA scheme offers two levels of bursaries and you should apply for the one that best suits your situation.

- Bursaries of £750
- Bursaries of £500 for **New Graduates / Emerging Artists**. Applicants must have less than 5 years' experience outside of education or training or to have graduated in 2015 or later.

Who can apply?

Visual Artists /Craft Makers who can demonstrate a commitment to developing their creative practice and are living or working or maintaining a studio space within the Local Authority area to which they are applying. Please contact your local partner for clarification if you need to.

Examples of things that have been funded

- Researching a new body of work
- Experimenting with new materials
- Skills development and courses
- Artistic mentoring
- Masterclasses
- Residencies that have a clear selection and support structure
- Additional support for making new work for exhibition

Due to the current COVID-19 related restrictions, we are aware of the heightened risks of travel, courses and exhibition so to mitigate these risks we are supportive of online support and courses as well as equipment that may not be readily available. We would expect you to have a clear rationale for how the purchase of equipment would develop your practice.

Exclusions (Applications will not be accepted)

- From students in education
- For projects/activities that have already started or are planned to start before the panel meeting date. Please allow 8 weeks from the deadline.
- For applications to the other VACMA schemes or Creative Scotland for support for the same project
- For community and/or educational projects
- For business development
- For film-making projects that fall outwith the visual arts context
- For applications purely focussed on marketing and websites

What we're looking for (criteria)

We want to hear about your work, your ideas and your experience. VACMA will give priority to applications that clearly show:

Quality – your application demonstrates an ongoing commitment to developing a visual art or craft practice and to developing the critical and technical aspects of your work

Impact – your application describes the opportunity for development and explains how the funding will specifically enable you to experiment and develop your work or practice

Quality

VACMA selection panel will consider the quality of your creative practice through the assessment of your overall application including your written responses, your CV and the supporting images or additional information you present.

Clearly written text will help us understand your work and what you are wanting to do. Think about how your work relates to your previous learning or future long-term goals as this will help us to assess your work in a wider context.

Your CV helps to show your experience and commitment to your practice. Put newest things first and take out any non-art related activities. This guide might help:
www.artquest.org.uk/how-to-articles/artist-cv

Your supporting material / images should be carefully selected and good quality in order to best show your work. Remember to include titles, dates, materials, dimensions and, where appropriate, the venue in which the work is shown.

Make sure that your work is well documented. The panel want to see your work clearly. Good images show that you value your work and have a level of professionalism. If you are proposing to develop work in another material then you should consider how your choice of images support that.

You should make sure that there is a clear connection and relationship between your written application, your use of budget/bursary and images.

Successful applicants will have demonstrated a level of commitment to their practice and will have achieved a body of work outwith formal education. If you have been practicing for less than 5 years you may want to consider applying for the **New Graduates / Emerging Artist Bursary**.

It is a priority for all VACMA partners to support new and diverse voices to become established in their practice and these bursaries aim to support artists at all stages of their career.

Creative Development

Have a clear reason for applying, describe the stage of career/experience you are at within your creative practice and how a bursary at this point will support your creative experimentation/ development. For example, to support your ideas, research, skills and ability to create new work. Your artist statement may also be included to support your application.

Impact on the long-term development of your practice

Please describe how this bursary will impact on your longer-term ambitions for your creative practice and professional development as an artist/maker. This may relate to other projects or opportunities.

Budget

As we have moved to fixed bursaries this year, we are just asking for a summary of the overall income of your project/activity including any additional funds and in-kind contributions. Partnership income is not a requirement of the fund. The number of days that you anticipate that you will be working on the project will help VACMA understand and monitor the wider impact of the awards.

For an exhibition you have been invited to do, the panel would expect to see the contribution from the gallery/organising venue involved. For applications to put on your own exhibition, the panel would expect to see a strong understanding of how it might reach an audience and benefit your practice.

These Awards are funded by the National Lottery through Creative Scotland with a range of partners across Scotland. They are not allowed to be a contribution to any other Creative Scotland funding (i.e. if you are applying to the Open Fund and a VACMA award for the same project, this would be considered ‘double funding’).

Risk

Due to COVID-19 we are all now used to thinking about risk. We want to know the risks you perceive in your proposal and how you will mitigate them. For example, it could be about courses that you hope to attend, travel, mentoring etc. You should consider how would you be able to complete or postpone your project if there is another lockdown.

Current advice from Scottish Government can be found here
www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

Creative Scotland's reports '**Understanding Diversity in the Arts**' and '**Equality Matters**' highlighted numerous and complex barriers to access, progression and representation in the arts, screen and creative industries.

These reports indicated that career progression is far from a level playing field. Challenges are more acutely felt by women, people with parental responsibilities, disabled people and those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Lack of connections, social structures and networks also featured highly as a barrier, with many mentioning the importance of informal networks in securing work or getting noticed.

We are committed to creating a fair scheme that reaches and supports the most marginalised in our society. It is also about creating the conditions for excellent art to be produced. Equality is about removing barriers, and diversity is about supporting and reflecting different cultures in Scotland, enabling all artistic and creative voices to be heard. Inclusion is about creating opportunities for people to work in, engage with, participate in, and experience arts and creativity throughout the country.

We want to know how this has impacted on you and/or how you might reflect this in your practice. Our funding decisions will prioritise those who are marginalised.

www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/connecting-themes/equalities-and-diversity

Environmental Responsibility

Creative Scotland is committed to operating in an environmentally sustainable manner and will work to ensure that individuals and organisations that we support do the same. In 2012 we developed and published our **Environment Policy** to guide all of our work.

On one relatively simple level, this involves reducing our impacts on the environment, including our carbon emissions (a legal requirement), resource use and waste streams. We want to know how you consider the environment in your practice.

Digital

There has been a shift in the use of digital platforms and presentations and we know that artists are thinking of new ways to present their practices. We are also aware that there is digital exclusion across areas of the population particularly for those who already face other barriers to participating in the arts. To help you think about these areas and safety for others you may find these resources useful:

digitalculturecompass.org.uk

uxdesign.cc/designing-for-accessibility-is-not-that-hard-c04cc4779d94

www.creativescotland.com/resources/professional-resources/guidance-and-toolkits/creating-safety

How to apply

Applicants should use the Application Form for their local area, which may be typed or hand-written. If hand-written, it should be completed legibly in black ink. Completed application forms **must** be signed by the applicant. If completing the form on your own word processing system please ensure that the format remains the same. At this time, we are not able to receive postal submissions so hand-written applications will need to be scanned and emailed.

Supporting visual material must be submitted with the application. No more than six images of recent work should be supplied and itemised on the Artwork Submission Form. You should select images based on their relevance to your written application. Unless you are applying specifically for the New Graduates / Emerging Artist Bursary, these should be images outside of education and training.

Please read the relevant application form for submission details as they vary across Scotland. Visual material from successful candidates may be copied and held for use in reports and publicity material.

The Application Process

All applications go to a panel meeting that will make decisions on who is supported. The panel is usually made up of representatives of the local authority and local arts professionals, and often includes local artists and makers. We use panels to help us achieve a broader perspective on current practice and they may be a mix of artists, makers, curators, tutors or other arts professionals. Creative Scotland officers are also involved in the panels to bring a wider overview of developments at a national level. Panels change regularly to ensure a range of voices and knowledge.

In advance of the panel meeting, the panel will read and consider your written application. During the meeting, the visual and written material is reviewed and discussed against the criteria. The recommendations for awards are based on these discussions. The panel will only use the application material to make its decisions and members will not bring personal knowledge of you or your work into the decision-making process.

Alongside your application, you must complete an Equalities Monitoring Form. This provides us with essential statistical information so that we can understand who receives funding and any gaps. The Equalities Monitoring Form is anonymous and will be processed separately from your application. Data is managed confidentially, has no bearing on your application and is processed in accordance with Data Protection laws and GDPR. If you do not know some of the information or if you prefer not to provide it, you can fill in the ‘Prefer not to answer’ box.

Each scheme is responsible for their own privacy notice that forms part of the application form and guidelines and relates to the information you provide in your application and how it is processed. You should read this notice before submitting your application.

Applicants will be notified within 8 weeks of the deadline on the outcome of their application. You will be contacted if there is any change to this timetable.

What happens if I'm unsuccessful?

These funds are competitive which means that not all applications that meet the criteria will be funded. If you are unsuccessful, you may be successful in another round so please do not be put off from applying again. If you are not successful, please take time to reflect on the feedback given or ask for feedback if available. If you do not understand the feedback or need more clarity you can call or email the person whose contact details will be on your letter. For example, you may have just missed out on receiving funding due to poor images or lack of clarity. Being turned down is not necessarily a comment on the quality of your work but rather the strength of your proposal compared to others being considered.

We have had experience of a good number of people being turned down in one round and then successfully reapplying with a stronger and more focussed application having considered feedback from the panel.

Deadlines

Autumn deadline: 5pm, Tuesday 10 November 2020
Winter deadline: 5pm, Tuesday 2 February 2021

Please check with your local scheme that they are running both deadlines or look at **www.creativescotland.com/vacma**

Both deadlines:

Aberdeen City
Angus
Ayrshire
Dundee
East Lothian
Edinburgh
Highlands and Western Isles
Renfrewshire
Shetland

February deadline only

Aberdeenshire TBC
Argyll and Bute
Fife and Perth
Forth Valley and West Lothian
Glasgow
North Lanarkshire
Orkney
South of Scotland TBC