

## Grant-Making Policy

### Introduction

Creative Lives has a long history of distributing grants to groups and organisations on behalf of external funders. These grants, which have ranged from £100 to £20,000, support grassroots and community-led activities.

Creative Lives offers two distinct types of grants:

- **Micro-grants (£50–£1,000 - €50–€1,000)** To support small-scale, grassroots initiatives, often with minimal application and reporting requirements to reduce barriers for informal or emerging groups.
- **Larger grants (£1,000–£20,000 - €1,000 - €20,000)** Intended for more substantial projects that require a greater level of funding and may involve additional due diligence and reporting requirements.

While we aim to keep application processes proportionate to the funding awarded we must also ensure that essential safeguards, such as appropriate insurance, safeguarding policies, and financial accountability, are in place where relevant, particularly for activities involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

For groups that do not yet meet these requirements, Creative Lives will offer guidance and a toolkit/briefing to help them develop the necessary policies, increasing their chances of success in future funding applications.

By operating a flexible and inclusive grant-making scheme, Creative Lives enables funders to support a wide range of people and groups, particularly those who may not be eligible for traditional or larger-scale funding.

This policy sets out how Creative Lives delivers grants to ensure a cohesive, fair, and transparent process.

### Application Process

Grants will be issued through an ‘open call’ process with a short, simple application form (Appendix 1) designed to minimise barriers to access.

Each call-out will be widely publicised through:

- Creative Lives social media platforms and website.
- Relevant partner platforms and networks.

The call-out and application form will clearly outline:

- Who is eligible to apply.
- Application deadlines and the expected decision timeline.
- The decision-making criteria used for awarding grants.
- The available funding levels.

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Criteria and eligibility may vary according to funders priorities. Creative Lives will work with funders to ensure grants remain as inclusive as possible.

We will embed EDI monitoring at the application stage and this data will be kept separate from the grant making decision process.

Creative Lives will use this data to ensure our work addresses inequalities in access to creative participation. This monitoring will also ensure we provide grant funders with clear, evidence based insights into the reach and impact of their financial support. By embedding this into our process we ensure that we do not rely on assumptions and that the work is delivered where it can have the most impact.

## **Eligibility**

Grants will be awarded to the following:

- Individuals (provided there is a demonstrable link to the group) Up to £300/€300.
- Informal, non-constituted groups (with a bank account or access to a third-party bank account) Up to £500/€500
- Constituted groups. No upper limit.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- Provide proof of a bank or building society account in the name of the group (or a third party managing funds on their behalf).
- Where relevant, have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place (eg when working with children, young people, or vulnerable adults). Copies must be provided.
- Provide proof of public liability insurance, if required for the nature of the activity.
- If a non-constituted group is applying, an individual or host organisation may apply on their behalf, provided there is a demonstrable link to the group.

Priority consideration will be given to non-constituted groups, as such groups often face barriers to other funding opportunities. Creative Lives recognises that small, informal groups should not be forced to create governance structures solely to access funding for grassroots activity.

## **Exclusions**

Applications will not be considered for:

- General appeals, sponsorship, or fundraising requests.
- National bodies or charities without a local connection.
- Activities where the primary objective is political or religious.
  - Applications from faith-based groups will be considered if the activity is open to all and community-focused, rather than religious teaching or worship.

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- Projects working with councils or civic bodies are eligible if they are not promoting a political agenda.

## **Decision-Making Process**

- A panel of at least two Creative Lives staff and/or relevant partners will assess applications (no single person will approve grants alone).
- Due diligence will be carried out to verify application details before finalising decisions.
- Where appropriate, applicants may be required to submit supporting documents, such as:
  - Governing documentation (for constituted groups).
  - An equal opportunities policy.
  - A safeguarding policy (if applicable).
  - Bank statements (may be requested if a grant is awarded).
- Conflicts of interest must be declared and will be handled in line with the Creative Lives Conflict of Interest and Gifts Policy.

## **Successful Applicants**

- Successful applicants will be notified within 20 working days of the deadline.
- A Grant Acceptance Form (Appendix 2) must be signed and if required relevant supporting documents shared before payment is released.
- Grants will be paid by BACS transfer to the named organisation, host organisation, or an individual (for grants up to £300/€300).

## **Acknowledgement & Use of Funds**

- Recipients are expected to acknowledge Creative Lives (and relevant partners) in any related publicity, including social media and marketing materials. The Creative Lives logo will be provided for this purpose.
- Funds must be used strictly for the stated purpose in the application. If circumstances change but the grant can still support a similar project with aligned aims, this must be agreed in consultation with Creative Lives.

## **Monitoring & Evaluation**

- Organisations may be required to complete a post-grant monitoring form, outlining:
  - The impact of the project on their organisation and community.
  - A breakdown of how the funds were spent.
  - Key data such as number of participants, sessions delivered, and total hours of activity.
- Creative Lives will use this information for case studies and social media content.
- Partner organisations may have additional monitoring requirements.

**Grant-Making Policy****Unsuccessful Applicants**

- All applicants will be notified within 20 working days of the deadline.
- Due to the high volume of applications, feedback will only be provided upon request.