



# STOKE-ON-TRENT CULTURE & EVENT PROJECT GRANTS

## 2023/24 GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

For applicants of Stoke-on-Trent Culture &  
Events Project Grants 2023/24

Total Funding available up to £75,000



City of  
**Stoke-on-Trent**



**STRONGER  
TOGETHER**

Working together to create a stronger city we can all be proud of



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# 1. Stoke-on-Trent Culture & Events Project Grants

## a. Introduction

Stoke-on-Trent City Council continues to be a proud supporter and sponsor of the development of cultural activities across the city to increase and support engagement across all communities.

To support this objective, the City Council have launched the Stoke-on-Trent Culture & Events Project Grants to enable organisations in the sector to deliver a diverse range of cultural activities that will enable more Stoke-on-Trent residents and visitors to participate in the cultural verve of Stoke-on-Trent.

## b. Grants Available

This fund will make £75,000 available in 2023/2024, with grants available to eligible cultural activities. Funding awards are not guaranteed and will be assessed through a robust application process after which successful applicants will receive some or all of the amount bid for.

Culture & Events Project Grants are for cultural organisations seeking a grant up to £10,000 to fund a cultural event or activity.

Funding is available for projects that meet our strategic priorities and help contribute to the Stronger Together vision:

- Increase participation in cultural activities, especially amongst those who are underrepresented in the cultural life of Stoke-on-Trent.
- Protect and improve mental and physical health and wellbeing. Evidence that cultural life makes a real impact on the health, wellbeing and aspirations of local people.
- Improve quality of life, independence and choice for vulnerable adults.
- Work with residents to make our towns and communities great places to live.
- Preserve and enhance the unique heritage of our city
- Celebrate and promote our great city and increase the number of visitors.

This guidance should be read alongside the relevant application form. If you have specific queries, not included in the guidance, please email:

[culturalgrants@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:culturalgrants@stoke.gov.uk)

## c. Culture & Events Project Grants – Eligibility

To be eligible for a Culture & Event Project Grant, organisations must:

- Be formally constituted in the UK and have their own bank account with at least two signatories (registered at different addresses)
- Be able to provide 2 years financial accounts
- State arts or culture as a main objective within their official governance document or have substantial experience of delivering arts or culture activity in the past 2 years

- Not already be in receipt of monies from the council for the provision of a service or project suggested in the bid, unless the proposal clearly evidences sustainability and increases outcomes for the residents of the city
- Have or be willing to have Public Liability Insurance in place up to a minimum value of £5million cover
- Be able to provide Safeguarding Policies if you intend working with potentially vulnerable residents, including children
- Be seeking funding from this grant programme of no more than £10,000
- Link to the council's priorities in increasing participation in cultural activities for residents and helping to meet Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Stronger Together priorities
- Be able to deliver the activity or event by the end of March 2024
- Organisations applying should be based in North Staffordshire but activity must be delivered within Stoke-on-Trent

Grant payments will be made in instalments: an initial payment of 70% is payable at the project start date (subject to grant award conditions) and a final 30% is payable following delivery of the activity, and on receipt of all outstanding information including a satisfactory evaluation report demonstrating that the outputs and outcomes stipulated in the bid have been satisfactorily achieved.

#### d. Culture & Events Project Grants – What We Won't Fund

- Projects which do not involve or engage Stoke-on-Trent residents and visitors as participants or audiences
- Projects which do not deliver against Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Stronger Together priorities
- Projects which have already happened or are going to happen before the decision date for the grant application, or projects which are due to finish after the closing date of the grant
- School or college courses or items already within the curriculum delivery.
- Prizes, competitions or fundraising events
- Projects without activity and outcomes that can be measured and evaluated
- Grants for property maintenance, office equipment, and operational services

#### e. Timeline – Key dates

- Applications submitted by: 12 May 2023
- Applications panel assessment: TBC
- Applicant notification\*: June 2023
- Project delivery phase: June 2023 through to March 2024
- Deadline for project evaluation reports: To be agreed

*\*Subject to change depending on volume of applications and availability of panel. Applicants may be contacted for further information/clarification during the assessment period.*

#### f. How to Apply

Go to [www.stoke.gov.uk/culturalgrants](http://www.stoke.gov.uk/culturalgrants) for more information and to complete our online application form.

## 2. The Application Form

### a. Part One: Eligibility for Culture & Events Project Grants

This is the section where we ask you about your eligibility to apply for the funding. You must be able to demonstrate how your proposal meets with the Stronger Together vision and enables the development of new cultural activity within the City. Ideas may also include the expansion of an existing activity to a wider audience.

### b. Part Two: About your Organisation/Contact details

If you are submitting a bid as part of a partnership this section should give the details of the lead organisation. This is the person we will have contact with about the bid and the person who will sign the funding agreement if you are successful.

### c. Part Three: Proposed idea

This section is your opportunity to tell us a bit about your project. You should provide a summary of the work you want to do and the reasons for your application.

### d. Part Four: Who will benefit

This section asks you about who will benefit from your project and how you will involve local artists, residents and visitors.

When identifying the people who will benefit it is useful to be clear about your target audience, this might include details on where they come from or which audience the project is aimed at e.g. children and young people, under-represented groups, vulnerable adults.

You should also include details on how you will promote/market your activity/project to maximise engagement and participation.

### e. Part Five: Intended outcomes

In this section you need to tell us which of the Stronger Together priorities your proposed project will meet:

- Increase participation in cultural activities, especially amongst those who are underrepresented in the cultural life of Stoke-on-Trent
- Protect and improve mental and physical health and wellbeing. Evidence that cultural life makes a real impact on the health, wellbeing and aspirations of local people
- Improve quality of life, independence and choice for vulnerable adults
- Work with residents to make our towns and communities great places to live
- Preserve and enhance the unique heritage of our city
- Celebrate and promote our great city and increase the number of visitors

When identifying performance indicators try to think about what you are trying to achieve and what will help to show the impact your activity has. Keep it simple and easy to record and maintain. It might be helpful to think about measures that will help you with future funding bids. Some examples could include:

- Survey/Questionnaire feedback from attendees
- Creative forms of evaluation
- Number of attendees at sessions / Number of sessions held
- Income generated
- Case studies or testimonies from partner agencies

#### f. Part Six: Project Costs

When applying, you need to work out how much you are applying for and include VAT costs if applicable. **The maximum amount you can apply for is £10,000**

This section includes space for you to provide a breakdown of the key costs associated with your project, you should include the overall project value clearly highlighting those elements which you wish to apply for funding. You should demonstrate here your requirement for the amount you bid for and the justification of that amount.

#### g. Part Seven: Project Resources

This section should provide information on who will deliver your project and what experience they have to do so.

#### h. Part Eight: Sustainability

This section is your opportunity to tell us how your project may work longer term and what else it may lead to. You should include information on any other bids you are working on, fundraising activities and income.

#### i. Part Nine: Collaboration

Stoke-on-Trent City Council support partnership working between local groups, artists and agencies – recognising the need for different strengths and assets. Use this section to tell us about partnerships you have in place which support your project.

#### j. Part Ten: Supporting Information

This is where we ask you to supply copies of any supporting documentation. We are unable to accept applications if information has not been provided. A full list is provided on the application form.

### 3. Assessment and Scoring

Initially, your application will be assessed to ensure it is eligible.

If your application is eligible it will be assessed via a panel of representatives using the scoring criteria below to ensure that the scoring has been undertaken consistently and fairly.

Each application will be considered by a panel who will score it against the following criteria:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Proposed Idea</b><br>Max Score 15         | <b>Idea clearly meets one or more of the Stronger Together priorities and the need is clearly understood</b><br><br>The proposal supports one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of new cultural event or activity</li><li>• Opportunity to develop or expand existing cultural activities.</li></ul> |
| <b>Community Involvement</b><br>Max Score 15 | Proposal clearly demonstrates who will benefit from the project and how  |
| <b>Intended Outcomes</b><br>Max Score 15     | <b>Application evidences what difference the project will make to Stoke-on-Trent residents and visitors in line with the priority objectives identified</b><br><br>Application clearly identified how the outcomes will be monitored and evaluated during the life of the funding period.  |
| <b>Project Costs</b><br>Max Score 5          | Clear and realistic breakdown of costs is provided with evidence of how Value for Money will be achieved   |
| <b>Project Resources</b><br>Max Score 10     | <b>Application evidences the roles and responsibilities of those who will be involved in the project delivery.</b><br><br>Clear plans for delivery are in place and the project is deliverable within the time frame   |
| <b>Sustainability</b><br>Max Score 5         | Application demonstrates how the project outcomes will be sustained in the longer term   |
| <b>Collaboration</b><br>Max Score 5          | Project demonstrates partnership working and collaborations.   |
| <b>Maximum Total Score</b>                   | <b>70</b>  |

All applications will be reviewed by a senior leadership panel for final verification and prioritisation based on the funding available and the number of bids received. This panel will also help to ensure that the scoring has been undertaken consistently.

## 4. Monitoring & Evaluation

You will be asked to provide evidence that you have completed the activities as set out in the application. This should be a short report detailing what your project has achieved and how. This can include photographic evidence and/or video.

If, for any reason, you are unable to complete planned activity, you must advise us as soon as possible to discuss. It may be possible to alter the agreement or identify alternative funding.

### Measuring Impact

Once your project is up and running we will ask you to provide regular monitoring information. This information will help to demonstrate the positive impact of your project/activity. We will agree the information to be collected with you as part of finalising the grant agreement based on the information in the application form.



## 5. Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q - What happens if your application is successful?**

**A** - If you are successful we will contact you by email to inform you of the amount, the terms of offer and the methods of monitoring and evaluation. You will be asked to sign a grant agreement to confirm the terms of the funding. We will monitor the project occasionally to ensure funding is spent in line with the terms of the agreement and the outcomes you have set out are being achieved.

### **Q - What happens if your application is unsuccessful?**

**A** - If your application is unsuccessful we will contact you via email and feedback will be given on request. The panel's decision is final and the feedback is not to be used as grounds for challenge. You may be able to review your application and resubmit your request in future funding rounds.

### **Q - Can we jointly apply with another organisation?**

**A** - Yes – we would actively support this. One organisation would need to take the lead role for the purpose of the grant agreement and payments so you should identify the lead partner on your application. Please note, the maximum you can apply for is £10,000 even if applying jointly.

### **Q - If we are successful, do we get all the funding up front?**

**A** – You may receive a proportion of the funding in advance, but this is strictly subject to your organisation entering into the Grant Agreement which will confirm how the funding can be spent. Failure to adhere to the agreement may result in funding being withdrawn and/or clawed back.

### **Q – What happens if we don't use all of the funding?**

**A** – Any under spend **must** be discussed with the Visitor Economy, Culture and Events team at Stoke-on-Trent City Council and at no point can the funding be used for anything else without prior approval from the City Council. Failure to follow this process may result in the funding being clawed back, as per any Legal Agreement undertaken.

### **Q - Our organisation has a large annual income and / or we are delivering a project via another funder – can we still apply?**

**A** – Yes - we recognise that larger organisations have the experience and the infrastructure to deliver a project that is inventive and forward thinking.

### **Q - Who is on the decision panel?**

**A** – The panel includes representation from key departments such as, Finance; Visitor Economy, Culture and Events Team; Communities; Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Public Health.

**Q - We are having an event to promote our cultural project – who do we need to contact?**

**A** – Please inform us of your plans so that we can help you to promote it. You may wish to invite the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Public Health and relevant Ward Councillors or members of staff from our Communications department and Visitor Economy, Culture and Events Team.

**Q - What about monitoring and evaluation?**

**A** - We will send a template monitoring and evaluation form to you when you are successful in your application. You will need to (where appropriate) take photographs and/or video to evidence your project and show how it's outcomes. Monitoring will take place throughout your project and you will need to submit an evaluation at the end of your funding period.

### Help and advice

For any help and advice with regards to the fund please email:  
[culturalgrants@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:culturalgrants@stoke.gov.uk).

## 6. Data Protection and Freedom of Information

### a. Data Protection

We will use the information you give us during assessment and throughout your grant period (if successful) to administer and analyse for our own research purposes.

We may give copies of all or some of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications and administer the programme, process, evaluation and impact. These organisations may include universities, external evaluators, partners of the Council and other groups involved.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council have a duty to protect public funds. The personal information we collect from you may be shared with fraud prevention agencies who will use it to prevent fraud, money-laundering and to verify your identity. We may also share this information with other parts of the council and/or other relevant organisations for these purposes. If fraud is detected, you could be refused certain services, finance, or employment. Further details of how your information will be used by us and these fraud prevention agencies, and your data protection rights, can be found at <https://www.cifas.org.uk/fpn>

If you provide false or inaccurate information in your application or at any point in the life of any Investment we award to you and fraud is identified, any monies paid will be recovered and legal action, including prosecution, may be taken against you.

We might use the data you provide for research purposes. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.

### b. Conflict of Interests

Where there is a conflict of interest, whereby the group/organisation is closely related to or associated with an officer of the Authority or serving Local Councillor/MP, this must be declared on the application form. No application will be accepted if it is deemed that these rules have been breached.

### c. Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request any information that we hold. This includes information received from third parties, such as, although not limited to, Culture and Event Project Grants applicants.

If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act we will release it, subject to exemptions, although we may consult with you first.

If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release if requested, you should let us know when you apply.