

Creative Arts Business Network

Small Grants Fund Guidelines 2026

A fund offering awards of up to £2000 to creative practitioners residing in or with an established arts practice in the Scottish Borders.

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Background

The main aim of Creative Arts Business Network (CABN) is to develop the professional creative sector in the Scottish Borders through a diverse programme of support, and to seek to strengthen the sector by working towards longer term strategic goals.

This fund has been created in response to emerging and established creative practitioners in the Borders calling for broader art-form support and access to funding opportunities.

Fund Overview

The CABN Small Grants Fund supports emerging and established, professional artists living in the Scottish Borders with funding for creative project development, research or training in **any artform**.

We welcome applications from both emerging and established creative practitioners and artists working professionally in, but not limited to: music, film, dance, performing arts, theatre, visual theatre, puppetry, animation, drawing, painting, installation, sculpture, textiles, social or participatory practice, cross-artform collaborations and photography.

Projects can be focused on:

- Creating work or project development
- Skills development or training

Funding requests must cover a **complete project**. Where the proposal forms part of a larger programme, the section submitted must be discrete, clearly defined, and fully deliverable with this award. In-kind contributions or costs met personally may be included, but applications cannot depend on securing additional external funding.

Projects may start at any time from **6th April 2026** and must be completed, including submission of an evaluation by **28th August 2026**.

Project Timeline

- **Funding Opens:** 10th February
- **Funding Closes:** 10th March, 12 noon
- **Notification of Outcomes:** by 3rd April
- **Project Start Date:** after 6th April
- **Project Completion & Evaluation Submission:** by 24th August

Who Can Apply

Emerging or established, professional artists over the age of 18 **at any stage** in their career who reside in the Scottish Borders.

If your project uses an art form outside your usual practice, we encourage you to include a collaborator or mentor with relevant experience, or plan to identify one with CABN's support. This does not apply to training projects.

As the regional VACMA fund supports visual artists and craft makers, we are prioritising applications from creative practitioners working outside of these artforms to broaden grant support available in the Borders. This does not exclude visual artists from applying.

What costs can we fund:

The costs of developing your project may include:

- Fees for your time and the time of your collaborators
- Technical and production costs
- Equipment or materials
- Training or workshop fees
- Travel and accommodation costs

As part of the application, you will be required to submit a budget breakdown on our template.

PLEASE NOTE: We expect all individuals involved in your project, including yourself, to be remunerated at least in line with minimum Scottish Artist Union, ITC or Equity rates. Please ensure you include in your budget the basis on which you have set fee rates.

It is the responsibility of each applicant to set rates in line with the individual roles and previous experience of their team.

If you need more advice about this, please contact us hello@cabn.info

Additional Support

Should you be successful our CABN Team will be happy to arrange a producing surgery session relevant to your project, with an artform specialist or member of our team to support your project realisation and to talk about next steps on receipt of the grant.

Access to space

If you need a space for your proposed project and do not already have one in mind, we may be able to help. CABN works with a network of people who have spaces available for hire, and we would be happy to connect you.

Please note that this must be arranged **before** you submit your application, as any request for space-hire costs must be included in your budget.

Access Support

CABN holds a separate access budget to cover any costs that help you complete your project or provide additional workplace support.

Please outline any access requirements in your application in the relevant section.

Access costs do not count towards your Small Grants Scheme budget request. However, please include an estimate of these costs within your overall application budget for planning purposes.

If you would like to discuss your needs prior to application or have questions about what can be supported, you are welcome to contact us at hello@cabn.info

Application Process

CABN have a total of **£6000** to award in project costs.

The maximum that you can apply for is **£2000**.

PLEASE NOTE: Demand for funding last year was significantly higher than the amount we were able to award. This year, we anticipate being able to fund only one or two projects at or near the maximum funding level.

The closing date for submissions is:

Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 12 noon

We will **not** accept applications after this date and time.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the process by: **Friday 3rd April at 17:00**

How to apply:

1. Email a completed Application Form which can be found on our website

OR

Submit a video answering the questions contained in the application form. This video should be not more than 7 minutes long. *(If you wish to submit via video, please contact to discuss ways of sending this to us).*

2. Complete the budget template provided, including a full breakdown of costs, fees and any in-kind contributions. Please remember fees should be set according to industry rates.
3. Complete an [Equalities and Diversity Monitoring](#) Form (linked [here](#)) to be completed

TO SUBMIT: Please save your completed form as a PDF and email to hello@cabn.info with the subject heading '(Your Name) _CABN Small Grants Fund Application' along with your budget breakdown template by **Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 12 noon**

You should receive our auto response to the email. If you receive this and are applying to the Small Grants Fund, please treat it as confirmation that your application has been received

If you require the application in another format, or require support or assistance, please contact us via email hello@cabn.info

Selection Process

Panel Composition

The selection panel will include:

- The CABN team
- Artform Advocates

Assessment Approach

Applications will be assessed across the five categories below:

- 1. Creative Potential**
 - Artistic merit of the idea pitched
 - Alignment with the artist's previous creative practice (education or professional)
- 2. Objectives and Timeframe**
 - Realism of the proposed timeframe
 - Clarity of what the artist aims to achieve
- 3. Benefit to Artist's Practice**
 - Whether this is the right stage in the artist's career for this support
- 4. Budget**
 - Fair payment for all involved
 - Overall realism and feasibility of the budget
- 5. Legacy**
 - Future potential and impact for the artist as a result of the project

Decision Making

The panel will discuss projects in detail and select those that best meet the criteria and can be resourced within the available budget.

All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the process by: **Friday 3rd April at 17:00**

Due to the expected high number of applications received we are unable to provide individual feedback to unsuccessful applications.