



London Sinfonietta, Tansy Davies - Cave  
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## NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS INFORMATION SHEET

# Asset purchase

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access funding programme for individual practitioners, arts organisations, libraries, and museum projects.

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[artscouncil.org.uk](https://artscouncil.org.uk)

# What's Inside

This information sheet relates to Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants. It can be used alongside the Project Grants 'How to Apply' guidance documents to support you to make your application.

See our [website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

In this information sheet, we will talk about the following:

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# What we mean by ‘asset purchase’

By ‘asset purchase’ we mean buying technical or creative equipment, which is needed as part of your project. The equipment (asset) will have both a cash value and use after your project ends.

Examples of this could be:

- Digital technology such as a laptop, tablet or system for business improvement
- An instrument
- A vehicle that is integral to the delivery of your project

If your application form includes any type of building work that is required to comply with statutory approvals, (such as replacing fittings like external doors or windows, curtain walls or installing services such as heating, lighting or ventilation) then you will need our permission to apply.

For further information, please read our **Building projects** information sheet [here](#).

## Including costs for technical or creative equipment

If you are including costs for technical or creative equipment as part of your application it's important you tell us:

- how the technical or creative equipment will be used for the benefit of the wider community
  - This could be through the work you are doing either in the short or the long term
- why the equipment is necessary for the project and appropriate for your needs

- why buying equipment is more appropriate than hiring it, where applicable
- if you've received quotes from more than one business supplier
  - We'd expect you to get quotes from more than one business or supplier. You don't need to send the quotes to us but you should refer to them in the expenditure questions
- your plans for continued use of the asset after the end of the project
- your plans for maintenance, storage and insurance, and any additional ongoing costs after the project ends

If you do not include this information, it is unlikely that your application will be eligible.

**We will consider how these new or improved assets will:**

- contribute to your development of creative or cultural activity
- make your work inclusive and relevant
- provide value for money
  - we consider the useful lifetime of the asset, as well as cost

**If your application is successful, we may ask for:**

- copies of quotes you have obtained
- your insurance certification
- evidence of suitable storage facilities, and/or
- confirmation of regular maintenance as applicable

# Second-hand equipment

Funds through Project Grants are not normally available for the purchase of second-hand equipment. When we consider value for money, we take account of the useful lifetime of the asset, and so in most cases we would recommend the purchase of new equipment.

Exceptions might include:

- restoration of pianos, where the cost of purchase of a new instrument is significantly more than the restoration
- restoration of period instruments
- printing presses
- kilns
- moving image film cameras and projection equipment
- second-hand assets that support environmental responsibility
- non-mechanical or non-electrical equipment
  - for example: an amateur theatre purchasing seating that has become available following the refurbishment of another theatre

Any second-hand equipment to be purchased with funds from Arts Council England should be guaranteed by the vendor and comply with current health and safety legislation.

If you are planning to replace assets as part of your project, consider possible re-use or recycling routes before responsible disposal.



# Musical instruments

This fund can support the purchase of musical instruments. We will normally only support the purchase of a single instrument when it is likely to be used by many people. For example: to be used in group workshops.

Organisations that purchase instruments as part of a project will need to record them as capital items in their annual accounts (listed by make, date of purchase, and serial number).

## Take it Away

In some projects, the **Take it Away** scheme may be more appropriate than applying to our open funding programme. This scheme allows individuals to apply for a loan of up to £5,000 for the purchase of any kind of musical instrument, and pay it back in nine monthly instalments, completely interest free. Find out more about the **Take it Away** scheme [here](#).

## Pianos

Venues and performing arts organisations can apply to Project Grants for a piano. In this case you should show in your application how the piano would benefit your performances and wider creative programme.

If you apply to purchase a new piano, please tell us why any existing instrument used for the same purpose cannot be adequately restored. If you would like to restore an existing piano, you should describe it (including its value), provide a quotation for its restoration, and an estimated post-restoration valuation from a reputable piano restorer.

If the instrument is to be kept in a building used by a variety of groups of people, tell us how you plan to ensure that the risk of damage will be minimised. Without this information, we may not be able to process your application.

## Organs

The Heritage Lottery Fund may consider funding organs of heritage importance, but we do not usually do this. If you can demonstrate that other funds are not available, we **may** consider funds toward:

- the cost of a new instrument
- refurbishing an old organ with musical potential, or
- the cost of relocating an existing organ

You will need to demonstrate regular use of the instrument, and in the case of church organs, evidence experience of and future plans for non-liturgical performances open to the general public.

## Steel bands, brass bands and pipe/flute bands

If you would like to apply to Project Grants for instruments, then you should provide evidence in your application of demand for at least 20 public performances a year.

You should also be able to demonstrate a commitment to performing new work and arrangements, and a repertoire that extends beyond competition test pieces.

Please be aware that applications for band uniforms for new bands and groups would be considered a low priority for us. For existing groups, uniforms, banners are considered to be part of ongoing running costs, and as such are not eligible for funding from this programme.

## Reconditioned brass instruments

We will only consider applications for reconditioning brass instruments when the instruments were purchased as new by the applicant, i.e. have always been owned by the same band or organisation. We will not fund the purchase of second-hand brass instruments.



If you are applying to restore an instrument, you should:

- describe it (including its value),
- provide a quotation for its restoration, and
- provide an estimated post restoration valuation from a reputable instrument restorer

### **Instrument banks**

We will consider applications from independent trusts that run an instrument loan scheme (for example: for young players taking lessons on an instrument, players of any age involved in community based music making, or young professionals at the start of a career).

The instrument bank would be responsible for purchasing and maintaining a pool of instruments to lend for extended periods to musicians unable to afford an instrument of their own. Applications for a pool of instruments must be submitted with a clearly defined policy and details of how the instrument bank would manage the loans.

### **Music recording equipment and other instruments**

This fund can support the purchase of recording equipment, however applications for recording equipment for the use of one musician or band alone are likely to be a low priority.

# Vehicle purchases

We can fund the purchase of new vehicles through Project Grants. The following guidelines have been developed with the help of the Community Transport Association, to encourage best practice in the purchase of vehicles:

- We will not fund the purchase of second-hand vehicles
- We can only support the purchase of vehicles where:
  - it is cheaper than renting for the length of a particular project and;
  - a clear long term benefit to communities or practitioners in England is evidenced in the application
- If you apply to purchase a vehicle designed to carry passengers, it must be equipped for use by disabled people, including wheelchair users
- We encourage organisations to make Arts Council England-funded vehicles available for other arts, cultural and/or community groups (depending on any legal or insurance constraints)

## Before you apply

Think about:

- how purchasing a vehicle is vital to the development of your creative or cultural activities
- whether you currently lack appropriate transport, and is buying a vehicle the best solution
- how you will manage the ongoing costs:
  - for example, insurance and maintenance

Contact us before you apply, as we may be able to put you in touch with other organisations in your area who have transport facilities or similar needs.

## In your application

You will need to be able to tell us about the following things:

- How the vehicle will **enable or enhance the creative or cultural activities you provide**
- Tell us **how much you expect to use the vehicle:**
  - How many people will be using it?
  - Who are they
  - Where will they be going?
- How the vehicle will help you to deliver your equal opportunity and access policies, if relevant?
- That you've investigated **existing local vehicle availability** and can clearly show the need for the new vehicle rather than partnering with an existing organisation.
  - This partnership may include vehicle pooling or sharing schemes
- How the vehicle will **benefit other creative and cultural groups** in the area
- You need to ensure that the **design of the vehicle is appropriate**, both for your project and for the passengers who will use it
- In selecting and using your vehicle, you should be **environmentally responsible**
  - This can be done by selecting an appropriate specification of vehicle for example a low emission, hybrid or electric vehicle. Also by regular maintenance, avoiding unnecessary mileage, and by driving smoothly.
- You must understand your **legal obligations** in operating the vehicle

- You will need to **provide appropriate training** for people who will use the vehicle. You should have procedures to minimise the risks to passengers, staff, volunteers and the general public

### Financial viability

You must budget for all the associated costs for the first three years:

- full maintenance and service costs (including MOT fees) for the vehicle
  - These are likely to rise as the vehicle ages. For minibuses and larger vehicles, these should include a maintenance contract covering safety inspections
- annual vehicle excise duty and comprehensive insurance cover, with an allowance made for the insurance excess that may be payable in the event of a claim
- breakdown and 'get-you-home' cover, to include transport of passengers using wheelchairs
- running costs (for example: fuel, oil, tyres, exhausts) appropriate to your vehicle and its use
- secure garaging and other security

These costs should include or exclude VAT as appropriate to your organisation's VAT status. If you are not registered for VAT, you may wish to consider if the purchase and operation of a vehicle makes it beneficial to seek voluntary registration.

# Selecting a vehicle

Tell us how you have chosen a vehicle that meets your requirements and certain minimum standards. You should show that you have sufficient knowledge to select an appropriate vehicle or that you have involved a specialist.

The vehicle selected should meet the following minimum requirements:

- It must comply with the 1986 Construction & Use regulations and revisions. You may need to seek advice to make sure you are complying with the law
- all vehicles should be fitted with a first aid kit and fire extinguisher
  - In minibuses and larger buses, the kits and extinguishers must comply with the relevant regulations
- you should consider the needs of disabled drivers and passengers
  - If the vehicle is going to be driven by a wheelchair user, you should select a vehicle with an automatic transmission and a conversion kit approved by the original manufacturer
- an experienced and responsible company should carry out all conversions.
  - They should conform to any requirements laid down by the original vehicle manufacturer.
  - As the operator of the vehicle you will be responsible for the legality of the vehicle on the road – not the converter
  - 'Guarantee of Work' should be obtained from the converter. It should last for at least 12 months from the delivery of the vehicle
- you should obtain three quotes for the supply and conversion of the vehicle including the fitting of security devices or alarms

## Vehicle access for passengers using wheelchairs

If the vehicle will be carrying passengers other than the driver and one or two front seat occupants, you will need to meet additional requirements to make sure that your vehicle is easily accessible for passengers using wheelchairs.

You need to make sure that you select a vehicle that is large enough in size and Gross Vehicle Weight to carry a full load (such as any wheelchair users, other passengers and/or any equipment).

You are responsible for ensuring any vehicle meets current standards and regulations:

- the vehicle must be supplied with a lift or easy-gradient ramp (to comply with British Standard 6109 pt2: 1989):
  - Ramps should allow independent access by a wheelchair user. This is only possible on vehicles with low floors or lowering suspension
  - The ramps should be fixed to the vehicle and power-operated
- the vehicle should have an entrance door no less than 750mm wide and with 1,500mm headroom so that it is accessible for wheelchair users
- any wheelchair space in the vehicle must be forward facing with a minimum dimension of 1,200mm (long) by 700mm (wide) and minimum headroom of 1,400mm.
  - The space could be fitted with one or more removable seats when it is not occupied by a wheelchair user
- as well as seatbelts for passengers in wheelchairs, the space also needs to be fitted with 4-point webbing tie-down. This will provide a safe way of restraining the chair
  - Both belts and tie-downs should have been tested to allow for the combined mass of the passenger and the wheelchair, of 180kg.
  - Wheelchair clamps are not suitable for electric wheelchairs. You should discuss options with the Community Transport Association (CTA) and your converter



- minibuses and buses should comply with the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions Code of Practice on the Carriage of Passengers in Wheelchairs on Buses -VSE 87/1. Copies are available free from the CTA.

If this is the first time your group has taken on responsibility for running a vehicle, you should also take advice from a recognised source, such as [CTA](#).

## Operating the vehicle

Once you have selected the right vehicle, you and your board or executive committee will need to ensure that you can operate it legally and safely, and that you have budgeted for the costs of running and replacing the vehicle.

### Operating legally

You will need to operate within the law, ensuring:

- the licensing of drivers and the vehicle
- that the appropriate insurance is in place
- the maintenance of the vehicle in a road-worthy condition
  - including MOT testing
- that the vehicle is operating within loading limits
- the wearing of seat belts
- the adherence to traffic regulations, and
- driving with an appropriate duty of care to other road users and pedestrians

If the vehicle (and/or its trailer) is to be used for recreational, educational or instructional purposes when stationary at a site, it will be classified as a 'mobile project vehicle'. This may have further legal implications for your organisation. You should seek advice from the National Playbus Association.

Different regulations apply to different vehicles, for example minibuses, goods vehicles, cars/MPVs/small vehicles – it is your responsibility to ensure any vehicle meets current standards and regulations.

### **Operating safely**

Consider the following questions:

- which member of your group or team will take responsibility for the vehicle and its upkeep?
- do you have an adequate system to assess driver competence and to train all your drivers in the use of the vehicle and its access equipment?
  - In the case of minibuses, MPVs and cars, this system should be at least to the national standards of the CTA's MiDAS scheme. This includes comprehensive information on the safety of disabled passengers. The CTA can also advise on training for other vehicles
- will all drivers be trained in emergency procedures? For passengercarrying vehicles, these should include practising the simulated evacuation of disabled passengers under realistic conditions
- will other staff travelling in the vehicle be given basic instruction in the use of access and safety equipment?
- what rules will you enforce to eliminate the risk of driver fatigue, particularly if your group is touring or performing at night?
- what risk assessment procedures will be in place to minimise, or eliminate, risks to passengers, staff, volunteers and the general public?

# Further information for vehicle purchase

## [Community Transport Association](#)

Advises on any aspect of non-profit minibus and accessible vehicle purchase and operation; operates discount schemes including vehicle purchase and insurance and other discountable produces for CTA member organisations.

## [Department for Transport](#)

Advice and information for motorists (including disabled and elderly motorists) on driving, car adaptations and vehicle choice.

## [Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency \(DVLA\)](#)

Customer enquiry line will help with questions of driving entitlement for UK and foreign licence holders.

# Contact us

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