

Museum Development South West

Small Open Grants 2024 Application Guidance

Museum Development South West's vision is to support diverse, inclusive and inspiring museums relevant to the lives of the diverse communities they serve. All our activity directly supports this vision including this grant scheme. We know that for many museums a small grant can be a powerful catalyst for change and improvement and this fund is designed with exactly this in mind.

We're looking to invest in museums where our funding will make a difference and are particularly keen to support those who have designed their projects after taking part in development work with us, so please ensure you tell us about this in your application. We also want to encourage museums or museum staff who have little experience with funding applications to take the opportunity to apply and help them on the path to more funded investment in the future.

Museum Development South West investment is not just about grants! We are also a team of approachable, knowledgeable staff here to help and guide you through the application and delivery process, helping you get the most out of the learning experience of applying for funding and delivering your project. If you have any questions, please contact your local [Museum Development Officer](#) or use the [contact form](#) on our website.

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Where does our grant funding come from?

Our grants are made possible thanks to support from Arts Council England, therefore our investment grants support [Arts Council England's four investment principles:](#)

- Ambition and quality
- Dynamism
- Environmental responsibility
- Inclusivity and relevance

Museum Development South West work to these investment principles through our four scheme aims, which are tailored to support Accredited museums in the south west.

Scheme aims:

- **Organisational resilience:** museums are thriving and adaptable community assets for now and the future (linked to Arts Council Investment Principles ‘Ambition and quality’ and ‘Dynamism’)
- **Collections development:** inspiring collections are cared for, developed, and shared with and for communities (linked to Arts Council Investment Principles ‘Ambition and quality’ and ‘Inclusivity and Relevance’)
- **Increasing inclusion and tackling inequality:** museums play their part in contributing to a better and fairer society for all (linked to Arts Council Investment Principle ‘Inclusivity and relevance’)
- **Environmental responsibility:** museums acknowledge and address the climate emergency, recognising they are part of a global community (linked to Arts Council Investment Principle ‘Environmental responsibility’)

Your project will need to respond to one of these four grant scheme aims and you will be asked to select one as part of the application process. Please note, Museum Development South West is committed to Equity Diversity and Inclusion and tackling the Climate Crisis throughout our work. We therefore encourage you to consider both when developing your project and how you might address them within your proposal no matter which grant scheme aim you are applying under.

Grants available

Our grants are supported with funding from Arts Council England and the Art Fund. Funding is available for grants from **£1,000 up to £10,000**. We aim to support as many museums as possible and encourage museums to carefully consider the level of their grant request and other suitable funders for support. Only a very small number of awards will be made at £10,000. Cash match-funding is not required but is encouraged where possible.

90% of the grant value awarded will be paid on receipt of grant acceptance. The 10% balance will be paid on receipt of grant reporting and evidence of expenditure.

Timelines and deadlines

Projects can start after formal acceptance of any grant offer is received by South West Museum Development (around 3rd June 2024) and finish by 31st January 2025. This allows a maximum of eight months to deliver the project.

- Application deadline: 12noon Monday 13th May 2024
- Notification of application outcome by: Friday 24th May 2024
- Deadline for award acceptance for successful applicants: Friday 31st May 2024
- Successful applicants may start their projects: Monday 3rd June 2024 (or sooner if acceptance is received)
- Projects must be complete: Friday 31st January 2025
- Project claims must be received: 12 Noon Friday 7th February 2025
- Project claims balances to be paid 2 weeks after completion of reporting process.

Grant Eligibility

This grant funding is open to museums and heritage organisations which are:

- Within the (ONS) South West of England, including Hampshire, Solent and Isle of Wight
- Accredited, Full or Provisional status or Working Towards Accreditation ([see here](#))

Unfortunately, we cannot accept applications from the following museums:

- Museums with a live grant award from Museum Development South West (excluding 'Capacity Builder' grants).
- National Museums (Fleet Air Arm Museum or Tate St Ives)
- National Portfolio Museums or partner museums within a National Portfolio Museum Consortium.
- Non-Accredited museum/heritage sites or not Working Towards Accreditation.

Further information and application guidance

For further information, or to ask a question about your proposed project, please visit our [website](#) to send us a '[get in touch](#)' message or contact your [local Museum Development Officer](#).

It is not a requirement for draft applications to be shared with your [local Museum Development Officer](#) prior to submission but we do recommend that you talk through your idea with them at the development stage. Applications with a strong collections

or volunteering focus are also encouraged to speak with the [relevant specialist Museum Development South West Officer](#) ahead of submitting their application.

What sort of projects are we seeking to fund?

Projects can take any form (excluding activity associated with ineligible costs) but must meet one of our four aims. We have included possible types of activity which we could support but also welcome alternate proposals which meet the aims of the scheme. Remember your project could be a pilot to test a concept before applying to larger funders in the future.

- **Organisational resilience:** Projects should support the museum's organisational health and resilience to help ensure their long-term sustainability. This could take the form of organisation/ governance development; developing fundraising or income generation practices or making savings; workforce consultation and development including volunteers; supporting wellbeing; digital audits; digital engagement strategies and marketing and communication strategies.
- **Collections development:** Projects should support the care, development, and access of collections. This could take the form of conservation assessment; collections rationalisation projects; storage and access projects; working with researchers or communities to develop knowledge and understanding of collections; community engagement and digitisation projects.
- **Increasing inclusion and tackling inequality:** Projects should support the museum's work to improve how they engage with actions and issues related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. This could take the form of the development of Equity Action Plans; evidenced based board and workforce (including volunteer) diversification; consultation and work with specific groups or communities e.g., youth panels; access audits; audience research - users and non-users; audience development plans to widening participation and optimising existing websites for access and inclusion.
- **Environmental responsibility:** Projects should support the museum to understand and mitigate their environmental impact or raise awareness of the climate emergency through collections and engagement programmes. This could take the form of energy audits; making energy efficiencies; greening their commercial offer; supporting visitors to make greener choices; exhibitions or programmes addressing environmental issues or increasing the biodiversity and sustainability of their site.

What costs are not eligible?

Grants cannot include costs for the following either as part of the grant or as match funding:

- Building work
- Capital costs (e.g., boilers or ongoing costs relating to capital equipment)
- Costs for existing staff or to provide backfill for existing staff deployed to deliver the project
- General ICT equipment
- Build/ development of new websites or platforms
- Software subscriptions including the purchase of Collections Management Systems
- Travel (except for a partnership project)
- Attendance at training events or conferences
- Training or consultancy services from Museum Development South West
- Membership subscriptions
- Venue hire or other overheads/ re-charges relating to the applicant museum(s)
- Charges for volunteers of the applicant museum(s)
- Alcoholic drinks
- Acquisitions for museum collections or conservation of objects
- Any expenditure for which the museum(s) cannot provide evidence (e.g., receipts, invoices)
- Any expenditure incurred prior to the permitted project start date
- VAT if your museum is VAT registered.

Working with Freelancers/ Consultants

Museum Development South West is committed to supporting freelancers/ consultants working in the museum and heritage sector. Applicants seeking to include work with freelancers/ consultants as part of their application should be aware of our best practice guidance developed in partnership with Museum Freelance. Successful applicants will be expected to uphold [Our Principles for Working with Freelancers](#) as part of the terms and conditions of their award.

How do I apply?

Applications are made online using the form on our website.

The deadline for applications to be submitted is 12noon Monday 13th May 2024.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Please contact us if you have access requirements and require an alternative format for applying.

Do I need to submit anything with my application?

No other documentation apart from your application is required.

We do encourage applicants to let us know if the project has developed from priorities identified through the Museum Development England Organisational Health Check, South West Visitor Insights, Volunteering Fit for the Future or other engagement with Museum Development. Please highlight this clearly when you talk about how this project fits in with your plans as we welcome applications that can progress previous development work.

What other grant requirements do I need to know?

Full details of the grant award and requirements of grant will be stated in successful applicants' offer letter. However, it may be useful for applicants to be aware of the following grant conditions ahead of application:

- Award holders will be required to submit supporting invoices and vouchers with their final grant claim form.
- Award holders must seek approval from Museum Development South West prior to making changes to their grant, including changes to goods or services to be purchased using grant funding.
- Where grant funds are paid in advance, any underspend against the grant will be reclaimed or deducted from the final balance payment.
- Balance payments will only be released following the successful submission of grant reporting. Grant reporting requirements are stated within the grant offer letter.
- Award holders must advise the grants team at Museum Development South West as soon as possible if they are unable to complete their project within the grant funding period.

Online form functionality

1. What are the questions?

We know that it is helpful to see what the questions are in advance of going online to enter information into the application form. You can download a PDF version of the application form from our website.

Please note some questions are dynamic i.e., they may or may not appear depending on your answer to a preceding question.

2. Numbering the Questions and the order of questions

We have not numbered questions as the application form logic is dynamic and therefore the order of the questions will change based on your response.

3. Why some questions show a red asterisk

The red asterisk is used to denote that a question is mandatory. This means you must provide an answer before being able to move forward within the survey. If you try to skip the question the software will red flag including a link which takes you to the first mandatory question that you missed. If you consider the question is not relevant, please enter N/A. This will allow you to move forward within the survey.

4. Links to the application form

If you wish to complete your application form in stages, it is possible to 'Save and Continue later'. When you 'save and continue later' you are issued with a new link, with all the saved information, so it is important to continue with this link and not go back to the original link.

5. Sharing links

It is possible to share a link to your application with colleagues, but it is important to ensure they 'save and continue later' when they are done with contributing to the application. Once they have clicked on 'save and continue later' the software will generate a new link, with all the saved information, and email it back to you at the original email address you entered when setting up the application. The email address entered should be the lead contact for the project. **You must use the most recent link sent to the main email address to prepare your application from that point forward.**

6. 'Save and Continue Later' for your application

When you 'save and continue later' you are issued with a new link, with all the saved information, so it is important to continue with this link. This is how you access your application with all the saved data. The original link you were issued when you registered will not contain the recent data uploaded. If you are unclear about which version of the link to use, email us at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk and we can send you a link to the latest version.

7. Downloading a copy of the completed application

Once completed, you can hit the 'Finish' button. You will receive an email thanking you for completing the application form and a download of the form with your entered data. If on receipt, you spot an error, or need to provide extra information,

you can request your application form back to edit. Simply email us at museum.development@bristol.gov.uk to request your application form back. This option is possible up till applications to the scheme close at 12noon on Monday 13th May 2024 between office hours of Monday to Friday 9:30am - 5pm.

Explanation of phrases used in the application form:

“Authority on behalf of the organisation”

When you submit your application, you must confirm that you have ‘authority on behalf of the applicant organisation’. This means you must have permission from your management team or board of trustees (whichever is relevant to you) to apply for the grant on their behalf. They must be aware of what you are bidding for and what you are proposing to deliver to ensure the organisation is fully supportive of your project and what it will take to deliver it if you are successful.

“Cash match funding”

Cash match funding means money that you or another organisation will also put into the project to help fund it in its entirety. A grant from Museum Development South West might only be for some of the funding you need to deliver your project.

“In kind support”

In kind support means any support provided or given in goods, commodities or services instead of money. This could be something that your museum or another organisation will provide for the project, such as staff hours, room hire (outside of your museum), that could be given a value and be included in the project budget.

“Mitigate the carbon impact of your project”

Every activity has a carbon footprint (the amount of carbon dioxide released or created by the activity in question), and therefore an impact on the environment. Museums have a responsibility to respond to the climate emergency by reducing their carbon footprint as much as possible. We ask that you consider the carbon impact of your project and how you might work to reduce this. For more information visit [Julie’s Bicycle](#). Please note that you do not have to calculate an exact carbon footprint for any project, just an indicator.

Here are a few things to consider (not an exhaustive list): How are you minimising travel / transport emissions? Are you sourcing supplies locally? Are you using local tradespeople/consultants? How are you minimising waste? If travel is involved, are you using public transport and/or car sharing? How are you minimising energy consumption? Are you offsetting the carbon impact?