

On Display! Improved Display and Security 2025 Grants Application Guidance

Many museums have objects they would love to have on display but are unable to do so due a lack of suitable security or display options. On Display! Improved Display and Security grants, will invest grants of up to £3,000 for successful museums to improve their collections care, security and display. This grant programme is supported using public funding by UK Government through Arts Council England and administered by Museum Development South West (MDSW). This is a national programme of public funding distributed by Museum Development providers across the country, enabling more museums to benefit from funding and implement best practice.

MDSW are 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 are interested in applying for an On Display! grant it is strongly recommended that you discuss your proposed project with the Museum Development South West Conservation Development Officer (CDO) before submitting your application. The CDO will be able to advise on your proposal and help you find appropriate suppliers where required. If you have any other questions, please contact your local [Museum Development Officer](#) or use the [contact form](#) on our website.

Contents

Scheme aims (relevant Arts Council investment principles):	2
What sort of projects are we seeking to fund?	2
Grants available	3
Timelines and deadlines	3
Grant Eligibility.....	3
What costs are eligible?.....	4
Working with Freelancers/ Consultants	4
How do I apply?	4
Do I need to submit anything with my application?.....	4
What other grant requirements do I need to know?	4
Further information and application guidance.....	5
Online form functionality.....	5
Explanation of phrases used in the application form	6

Scheme aims (relevant Arts Council investment principles):

- **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’)

To find out more about the Arts Council investment principles please visit their [website](#).

What sort of projects are we seeking to fund?

The Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport has made available funds for grants to enable museums to improve security and display. The scheme encourages museums to enhance their visitor experience by improving display cases, collection care, security measures such as alarms and CCTV, and overall exhibit presentation. This could include for example, having a security audit of the museum, making improvements to security or improving display with a new display case.

Grants available

Funding is available for grants of up to **£3000** to enable museums to undertake improvements to security or display. This is a limited fund and the scheme is likely to be very competitive.

Cash contribution (sometimes known as cash match funding) is not required but is strongly 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 must start after Monday 9 June 2025 and finish by Friday 6 February 2026. This allows a maximum of 8 months to deliver the work.

- Applications open: Monday 28 April 2025
- Application deadline: 12 Noon Monday 19 May 2025
- Notification of application outcome: Friday 30 May 2025
- Deadline for award acceptance for successful applicants: 12 Noon Friday 6 June 2025
- Successful applicants may start their projects: Monday 9 June 2025
- Projects must be completed by: Friday 6 February 2026
- Project claims must be received by: 12 Noon Friday 13 February 2026
- Project claims balances to be paid two weeks after project reporting processes are complete

Grant Eligibility

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

- Within the (ONS) South West of England
- Accredited, Provisionally Accredited or Working Towards Accreditation

Unfortunately, we cannot accept applications from the following museums:

- National Museums
- National Organisations (e.g. National Trust, English Heritage)
- National Portfolio Museums or partner museums within a National Portfolio Museum Consortium
- Museums which are neither Accredited nor Working Towards Accreditation

What costs are eligible?

The only costs eligible under this grant scheme are those directly related to improvements to collections care, security or display.

For guidance, please speak to our [Conservation Development Officer](#) prior to submitting your application.

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 should be made online using the form on our website by **12 noon Monday 19 May 2025**.

Applications are made through an online questionnaire. The application questions are available in an offline format on our website if you wish to view them before undertaking the online questionnaire.

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.

What other grant requirements do I need to know?

Full details of the grant award and any requirements will be given in your offer letter if you are successful. However, it may be useful to be aware of the following grant conditions ahead of your application:

- You must seek approval from Museum Development South West prior to making changes to your 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 and the submission of invoices and receipts to evidence

spend. Full grant reporting requirements are stated within the grant offer letter.

- You must advise Museum Development South West as soon as possible if you are unable to complete your project within the grant funding period.

Further information and application guidance

For further information, or to ask a question about your proposed project, please contact our [Conservation Development Officer](#), your [Museum Development Officer](#) or use the [contact form](#) on our website.

For specific queries relating to the online application, please see below.

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 an offline 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 proceeding question.

2. Numbering the Questions and the order of questions

We have not numbered individual 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 see a screen thanking you for completing the application form. If you realise you have made 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 until applications to the scheme close at noon (12pm) on Monday 19th May 2025 .

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.



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Media & Sport**

“Cash contribution (cash match funding)”

Cash contribution 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. Please note that for a cash contribution to be considered as part of the application, it must be included in your project budget and allocated to eligible areas of spend as detailed in the grant guidance.

“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.

Thank you for your interest in On Display! Improved Display and Security

We look forward to receiving your application.