



# Arts Project Funding: everything you need to know

# Who am I?

**Freelance Consultant, Producer,  
Mentor & Advisor**



- Background & artistic specialism in dance, outdoor arts, participation, young people
- 9 years in Lincolnshire at artsNK
- Project & Development Manager at Dance Hub Birmingham, followed by Creative Learning Producer at Motionhouse
- Freelance portfolio from May 2020
- Clients include: individual artists, arts organisations, collectives, performance companies, festivals
- Worked on: Arches Worcester Festivals, Birmingham 2022, Xzibit Young Creatives, Propel Dance & more.
- Fundraised over £1.25m

# In this workshop, we will cover...



- How to get your project funded, including from Arts Council England's National Lottery Project Grants and Developing Your Creative Practice
- Match funding, funding from other sources & partnerships
- Q&A



# Types of project: what will ACE fund for project grants?

## **Main focus!**

**Delivering a project to, for,  
with and by a community, led  
by an artist/organisation (or  
the community) and making  
an impact. Must meet  
Outcomes & IPs...**

- Community engagement
- Co-creation, co-design, co-curation & consultation
- Participation, learning, outreach, education activities
- Admin, project management, producing, tour booking
- Research & development, testing, piloting an idea or concept
- Creation of new work e.g. a full-length performance
- Touring

# Types of project: what will ACE fund for DYCP?

**Main focus!**  
**Developing your  
practice - in a personal,  
relevant and meaningful  
way to you at this time**

- R&D: practical and theoretical
- Learning/refining a new skill
- CPD & training (non-academic)
- Coaching & mentoring
- Personal practice / studio hire / desk research
- Collaborators
- Networking
- Transitioning to a new or fusing a form/discipline

# Project Grants: essential info

- Open access funding - no deadlines
- Apply for under £30k: 6-8 weeks decision turnaround time
- Apply for over £30-100k: 12-16 weeks turnaround time
- Apply for over £100k for nationally significant project or touring, submit an EOI
- Chat to your RM (artform specific) about your project as an introduction, get their advice
- Upload a cashflow spreadsheet for over £30k applications (no master budget)
- Get going on seeking letters of support from project partners confirming match and/or demonstrating quality/commitment to your project

# WRITING AN ACE FUNDING APPLICATION in a nutshell

- Apply a productivity technique to keep you motivated/on track
- Use a **template**
- Keep working on draft until happy > tag team with colleagues / external eye or critical friend > add comments as you go
- Gather biogs from creatives involved
- Gather letters of support
- Always drop in ACE buzzwords directly from the strategy



- Ask yourself, so what?
- Ask someone to proofread it (multiple times)
- Edit & cut, repeat & repeat some more to get to the CHARACTER COUNT! (omg)
- Copy & paste onto Grantium
- Upload supporting docs / links
- Attach docs >> cashflow & LoS
- Final checks
- SUBMIT



# LET'S CREATE Strategy: what you need to know

## INCLUSIVITY & RELEVANCE

- Co-creation, co-design, co-curation
- Community involvement & consultation
- Commitment/pledges to EDI (& equity)
- Youth/participant voice
- Equal opportunities in practice
- Fair recruitment policy & practice
- Language & comms
- Demographic data & statistics

## DYNAMISM

- Business & leadership skills, commitment to CPD + succession planning
- Agile ways of working
- Training
- Adaptability, pivoting, resilience
- Mental health & wellbeing support
- Embracing of technology in back office & delivery of projects
- Digital literacy & confidence



## AMBITION & QUALITY

- Define ambition to/with your community - through what lens?
- Feedback mechanisms
- Data collection
- Metrics & measures
- Leading collaborators/creatives involved with track records/profiles
- Skill & talent development - learning, training, CPD, mentoring

## ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Data collection
- Understanding of carbon footprint of the project/org/venue
- Pledges & commitments
- Themes & topics for advocacy



# DYCP: in a nutshell

- Focus in on an inquiry question
- Ask yourself: what difference will this make?
- Answer 3 questions: you biog, what will you do, why will you do it?
- Use a **template**
- Gather letter of support - someone who will vouch for your practice/knows your work
- Drop in ACE buzzwords directly from the strategy

YOU DIDNT COME THIS  
FAR TO ONLY COME  
THIS FAR

- Add link or supporting doc (not a social media account!)
- Ask someone to proofread it (multiple times)
- Edit & cut, repeat & repeat some more to get to the CHARACTER COUNT! (omg)
- Copy & paste onto Grantium
- Final checks
- SUBMIT

# Seeking match funding

## Where to start? 6 steps to success

### In short - just ask!

1. Start with your project budget - where are the gaps?
2. Identify who might support your project/work - why? Who?
3. Distinguish between cash & in-kind support
4. Make an approach - sell it to them/build a compelling case/alignment with their objectives
5. Build the relationship
6. Request in writing/letter of support



# Match: other types of funding/revenue

## 1 Trusts & Foundations

Depends on your constitution (CIC, CIO etc).  
Apply by writing a letter/ completing application form. Relationship is vital!

## 2 Private Income

Cash carried forward from a previous project / another budget

## 3 Crowdfunding

Making your work/project into an appeal - where the public pledge amounts of money to get you to a total ask.

## 4 Office

Earned Income, Sales & Box  
Via a third party seller, online via yours/ other websites &/ or marketplaces. From merchandise/ other sales

## 5 Local Authority Funding

Grants or commission monies for specific activities/parts of your project.



# Other bits of wisdom

→ Watch my Culture Central webinar about fundraising, alternative revenue streams & bidwriting here: <https://youtu.be/RwGG-Q72Kx>

- **Match funding** >> think about earned income/carried forward budgets, search or join funding databases containing long lists of trusts and foundations, crowdfunders, partner in-kind support (always get them to add the value of this in a LoS)
- Always read the ACE 'official' guidance.
- Familiarise yourself with Let's Create Outcomes & IP's (think OTT - you can never know too much!).
- Let your budget tell the story... include all overheads such as running costs for the project time period (and disguise more if you can).
- Use a character count website to help you edit answers down to size.
- Things that strengthen a bid:
  1. the 'big' vision - potential future partners or developments as a result of the work, detailed creative content
  2. all partners & activities Confirmed (as opposed to Expected)
  3. a well planned timeline
  4. Ambitious but SMART - based on some kind of business plan or strategic thinking or evidence

## Things I wish I had known starting out



- ★ The industry/sector is a small world: everyone is connected
- ★ You learn as you go - funding gets easier with experience
- ★ Grit your teeth: there will be tough times & you will get rejected
- ★ Find your USP or niche: what makes you special? Learn how to tell your story in a clear & compelling way
- ★ Charge your worth (& use industry rate cards)
- ★ Networking is key: it really is 'who you know', make a connection with the funder if you can (have a meeting)
- ★ Brush up on your business skills, they're handy for running a project & writing a bid
- ★ Find your tribe, cultivate relationships - get help if you need it!
- ★ Be open and adaptable to change - you might need to resubmit



## QUESTIONS?

For advice, support with your bid and to  
see more about me & my work at:

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