

Access support for funding applications



What we will cover



Access to work



Access support offered by key funders



How access support works with Arts Council England

Who can get access support?

Access support is available for Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people who experience barriers when applying for funds or using services.

It is also for those experiencing poor short or long-term physical or mental health.

Most funders will not ask for proof. They consider self-ID valid.

A support worker's role is to remove barriers for someone applying for funding. This must be tailored to your needs - there is no 'one size fits all' approach.

Access support for making funding applications

- Not all funders will pay for access support - but its always worth asking them if they do
- Most of the bigger funders have an online application process - some of these systems are more accessible than others
- Some funders will accept filmed applications, but not many, this is more common for contracts and commissions
- Support work is **not bid-writing** and should not be thought of as such. The support worker's responsibility is to assist the person they are supporting to **articulate their idea and application form answers** in **their authentic voice**.
- Support workers can support you to **find the information you need** (e.g. travel times, venue hire costs) but it is not within their remit to provide prescriptive answers or make decisions for the person applying.

Access to work

- Useful information and resources available on the [Disability Arts Online website](#)
- Access to Work is a Department for Work and Pensions resource that helps to create a more accessible work environment. It provides grants to remove barriers that disabled people face in undertaking paid employment.
- Funding is available for both self-employed people and employees of an organisation.
- If you call yourself a Freelancer but are in fact self-employed, it's important you do not use the term Freelance with Access to Work to describe your work status. This will ensure you can access a grant that supports you all year round, for all your self-employed work tasks.
- Access to Work uses certain terminology for different types of support workers. You are much more likely to get the support needed if you use their language. If you want to get into the real detail, you can also look at the Access to Work staff guide. [Access to Work: staff guide - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The National Lottery Community Fund

Contact details for England

(Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

[0345 4 10 20 30](tel:03454102030)

general.enquiries@tnlcommunityfund.org.uk

Apex House, 3 Embassy Drive, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 1TR

Text relay 18001 plus 0345 4 10 20 30

BSL users can [contact us in England using SignVideo](#)

- No specific access bursaries to support writing applications
- They advise contacting them direct
- Their advisers can talk through the application with you
- There are BSL videos for each fund and PDF or word copies of all grant information and application forms
- [Funding | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)

National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF)

Contact details for West Midlands

Email: MidlandsandEast@heritagefund.org.uk

Telephone: [0121 393 4734](tel:01213934734) (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)

Address: [Landmark Space, Two Snow Hill, Snow Hill Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6GA](#)

Visiting and access

If you wish to visit in person, please email or call in advance to book an appointment.

The building is wheelchair accessible. There is step-free access via the main entrance on Snow Hill Queensway. There are lifts to all floors, including a platform lift from the ground floor to reception on the first floor. Lifts have a voice announcer and there is a hearing enhancement loop at reception. Accessible toilets are available.

You can contact NLHF through [Relay UK](#) using your text phone or Relay UK app. Dial 18001 plus 020 7591 6044.

- NLHF can cover the cost of any reasonable adjustments you may need during the application process. This could include BSL interpretation, translated materials or digital accessibility.
- You need to contact them direct to discuss the type of support they can provide.
- Make sure you include access costs in your project budget. Further info in their [good practice guidance](#).
- [Reasonable adjustments | The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF)

Contact details:

Email: accessibility@phf.org.uk or call 020 7812 3300

- PHF Can provide a bursary of up to £750 to support each stage of the application process
- This bursary support can be for completing the online application form or initial enquiry calls or follow-up conversations with Paul Hamlyn Foundation staff.
- Contact PHF to let them know what type of access support you need.
- They will then ask you to confirm who is providing the support and ask for a quote
- Support worker will invoice PHF direct
- [Access support bursary | Paul Hamlyn Foundation \(phf.org.uk\)](https://www.phf.org.uk/access-support-bursary)

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Contact details: funding@esmefairbairn.org.uk or phone: 020 7812 3700

- Access Payment of up to £500 to support you to apply.
- Contact them to let them know you need access support.
- If you're neurodivergent and not sure what type of support you need to apply, they can put you in touch with a specialist organisation to discuss your needs.
- Should your application progress to the next stage and they invite a full proposal, you will be able to apply for an additional Access Payment.

[Accessibility and support applying | Esmée Fairbairn Foundation \(esmefairbairn.org.uk\)](https://esmefairbairn.org.uk)

British Film Institute (BFI)

- BFI work with TAPE Community Film and Music to provide access support. TAPE is an award-winning, community arts charity based in North Wales.
- You can contact TAPE by telephone on 01492 512 109 or [use their contact form](#).
- Check if the fund you want to apply to has a deadline - you should get in touch as early as possible if you need access support.

[Get access support to apply for BFI funds | BFI](#)

Arts Council England (ACE)

- ACE will pay for access support to make an application to any of their funding programmes.

Here are a few examples of what support work can include:

- Note taking and interpreting ideas to write up answers
- Helping process the application questions and forms
- British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation
- Helping the applicant navigate Grantium (their application system)
- Signposting to other resources or asking ACE for additional support

They cannot pay for:

- Translation from other languages into English
- Costs related to caring responsibilities
- Costs covered by [Access to Work](#) or other sources
- Developing a project e.g. the services of a bid writer or development consultant



Experiences of access support

Applying to ACE for access support

Contact details

Tel: 0161 934 4317 (10am - 4pm)

Email: access@artscouncil.org.uk

- [Online form to request access support](#) - you can get assistance from customer services to submit a request by phone, email or live chat.
- You will be asked to describe the barriers you experience in making funding applications and your access needs.
- You can ask ACE to find a support worker for you if you do not have one
- If you have a support worker you will need to provide their details and breakdown of the support they will provide and what their fees are. You can ask them to provide this (and they might help you with the request form too)
- [Access support | Arts Council England](#)

How much support to request

Developing Your Creative Practice (DYCP)	up to £600
National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) - under £30k	up to £900
National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) - over £30k	up to £1200
National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) - resubmission	up to £600
Applications requiring an Expression of Interest (EOI) (split between the EOI and application)	up to £1500

All figures are inclusive of VAT. The day rate should reflect the skills and experience of the support worker up to a maximum of £300 (with 1 day being 8 hours of work including breaks)

Finding a support worker

- Anyone can provide access support for funding applications, they do not have to be an experienced or professional support worker.
- You can usually choose the person that provides support to you, they need to be able to provide the specific support you need.
- It's helpful if they are familiar with the arts funding system. They can also contact the funder for advice.
- ACE will try to help you find someone if you do not have anyone. BFI have a specific access support provider - TAPE Community Music & Film

Arts organisations who provide support workers

- [Amy Dalton-Hardy](#)
 - [Sallyanne Rock](#)
 - [Manda Graham - Creative Spark](#)
 - [Nighttime Economy Solutions](#)
 - [Hijinx](#)
 - [TAPE Community Music & Film](#)
 - [Curiosity Productions](#)
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Include personal access costs in your application

- Personal access costs won't be counted as part of your main application total for ACE applications.
- Check funding guidelines for what you can include in personal access costs.
- Making your project accessible for the public does need to be included in your main application budget.

Any questions?

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