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### 1. Introduction

Museum Development Midlands' (MDM) mission is 'To empower Midlands museums to thrive'. To meet this mission, we are providing a programme of Open, Strategic and Responsive small grant funding opportunities to enable museums to address organisational priorities, embed learning, develop their people and grow audiences.

MDM is committed to inclusive practice. If there are any adjustments that would support you in your application, or you would like this document in another format, eg Braille, Large Print, audio, please let us know.

#### Our main grant types are:

- **Open Grants:** Open to all eligible museums to fund any activity which responds to the Arts Council England (ACE) Investment Principles, and/ or is in line with existing museum forward plans or other key policy and planning documents, including addressing any Accreditation areas for development or required actions
- **Open Art Fund Grants:** This strand of Open Grants is supported by funding from Art Fund (LINK) and focusses on Workforce Development and Audience Development work
- **Strategic Grants:** Strategic grants are linked to MDM development programmes to enable participants to embed change and build on programme outcomes. These will be released alongside individual programmes.
- **Responsive Grants:** Flexible grants to respond to urgent or unforeseen need, e.g., time critical support for organisational resilience, or a flooding or security emergency. Any eligible museum can apply, at any time. These grants can be awarded outside the usual grant schedule but must be discussed with a member of the MDM team to assess suitability before applying.

- **CPD/Conference Bursaries:** to support museum practitioners, including freelancers, to attend relevant conferences or undertake CPD opportunities to upskill in their role. Priority for first time conference attendees and programme cohort participants. (\*Art Fund)

**Please note that this guidance is for our Open Grants (including Open Art Fund grants)** *If you are applying for a CPD/Conference Bursary, Strategic Grant (linked to MDM programmes) or a Responsive Grant you will need to complete a different application form. See [website](#) or email [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk) for more details.*

## 2. Eligibility Criteria

### **Eligible for MDM Grant Funding**

- Museums in the Midlands which are Accredited (either Full or Provisional) or are formally Working Towards Accreditation (excluding NPO or Nationally Funded Museums). Unsure if you're Accredited or Working Towards Accreditation? You can download a list of Accredited museums and a list of Working Towards Accreditation Museums from the [Arts Council England Webpage here](#).
- Museum organisations that are not Accredited or Working Towards Accreditation, or other linked arts or community organisations can be part of a project partnership grant application, but an eligible Accredited Museum *must* be the lead applicant
- Established Museum Forum networks representing Midlands Accredited museums among their membership may also be eligible for grant support for projects. Please contact [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk) to discuss your proposal.

### **Not Eligible for MDM Grant funding**

- Nationally funded museums or museums directly benefitting from ACE National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding are not eligible for MDM grant funding
- Museums or organisations that are not Accredited or Working Towards Accreditation and are not working in a partnership with an eligible Accredited Museum
- Museum forums that do not represent Accredited Midlands museums and whose project does not directly benefit those museums

## 3. What will we fund?

The MDM Open Grants programme can support museums to implement action plans, deliver projects, develop people and audiences, and pilot new ideas and initiatives.

MDM Open Grants can support museums in the following key areas:

- Collections Care and Management
- Organisational Development and Resilience
- Environmental Responsibility
- Audience Development and Inclusive Museums
- Workforce and Volunteer Development

You must show on your application that your project responds to one or more relevant [Arts Council England \(ACE\) Investment Principles](#) and is in line with your existing forward plans or other key policy or planning documents, including your Accreditation Development Areas.

Below are some examples of the type of work we can fund, organised by our key grant areas. We have suggested where these work areas might link into the four ACE Investment Principles:

- Ambition and Quality
- Dynamism
- Environmental Responsibility
- Inclusivity and Relevance

**Examples of the type of work an MDM Open Small Grant could fund include (but are not limited to):**

<b>Collections Development and Management</b>	<b>Related ACE Investment Principle</b>
Collections care and management support such as improving documentation and care of collections, addressing backlogs, or rationalisation and disposal reviews.	Ambition and Quality
Implementing recommendations from collections related research and reports, including emergency planning and security reviews.	Ambition and Quality
Commissioning collections research and development projects.	Ambition and Quality/ Inclusivity and Relevance
Support for county museum forums to celebrate and share the work of its members (to include Midlands Accredited museums).	Ambition and Quality

<b>Organisational Development and Resilience</b>	<b>Related ACE Investment Principle</b>
Accreditation support for museums to prepare for Accreditation, or address action points from outcome letters.	Dynamism
Governance development and succession planning support to help make your organisation more sustainable.	Dynamism
Fundraising development, scoping plans or piloting projects for bigger future funding bids, such as ACE's National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG).	Dynamism
Organisational resilience and business planning, including exploring new models of income generation.	Dynamism
County Museum Forum review project to ensure that the forum is structured to deliver the best outcomes for its members (to include Midlands Accredited museums).	Dynamism
Implementing recommendations from research and reports, including governance reviews or skills audits.	Dynamism

<b>Environmental Responsibility</b>	<b>Related ACE Investment Principle</b>
Projects engaging audiences with the climate crisis change through collections.	Environmental Responsibility
Energy audits to review and recommend ways to reduce energy use.	Environmental Responsibility
Investment in initiatives or equipment to support green objectives or implement outcomes of energy audits (excluding revenue or major capital works).	Environmental Responsibility
Environmentally responsible collections care practices.	Environmental Responsibility

<b>Audience Development and Inclusive Museums</b>	<b>Related ACE Investment Principle</b>
Inclusive Museums initiatives, including implementing measures to improve access.	Inclusivity and Relevance
*Collections programming, such as collections access projects or community co-production projects, including digital engagement and research into untold stories of collections. (*Art Fund)	Inclusivity and Relevance
*Audience Development initiatives, especially to reach new audiences and communities currently less likely to access your museum. (*Art Fund)	Inclusivity and Relevance
*Initiatives to improve inclusivity and diversity in workforce, trustees and volunteers. (*Art Fund)	Inclusivity and Relevance

*\*These strands of activity are supported by Art Fund*

<b>Workforce and Volunteer Development</b>	<b>Related ACE Investment Principle</b>
*Workforce and Volunteer training and development, including wellbeing, team building, and celebration events. (*Art Fund).	Dynamism

*\*These strands of activity are supported by Art Fund*

If you are unsure whether a cost could be covered by the grant funding, or if you need any further guidance how your project might fit with any of the ACE Investment Principles please contact the MDM team at [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk) for clarification before making an application.

### **What the grant cannot fund:**

N.B. Small grants can fund a wide range of activity but cannot fund:

- Building work or capital expenditure (*We define capital expenditure as money spent on the purchase, improvement, restoration, construction or creation of a fixed asset, including expenses or costs that are directly attributable to delivering the capital project*).
- Revenue costs, such as salaries and general running costs
- Ongoing capital or maintenance costs
- Any expenditure for which the museum cannot provide evidence (eg receipts)
- Costs incurred prior to the project start date
- Projects already partially funded by ACE
- Match funding for monies for other funding sources

### **Alternative Funding**

If you have a complex project in mind requiring a longer timescale, you might want to consider applying to [ACE's National Lottery Project Grants \(NLPG\)](#) instead which can fund projects lasting up to three years. Applications for projects for funding between £1,000 and £30,000 are assessed within eight weeks. Within NLPG, ACE have a number of Time Limited Priority programmes some of which specifically target museums.

## **4. Application Process**

We recommend that you speak to a member of the MDM team about your planned activity before applying. Please email [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk) to request a conversation.

There are two rounds of grants planned for 2024-25. These dates apply to Open Grants, including Art Fund Grants:

<b>KEY DATES</b>	<b>Round One</b>	<b>Round Two</b>
You can apply from:	Tuesday 28 May 2024	Monday 12 August 2024
You must submit your application form no later than:	Thursday 4 July 2024	Thursday 26 September 2024
We will tell you if you have been successful:	w/c 22 July 2024	w/c Monday 14 October
You must complete your activity expenditure by:	Friday 28 January 2025	Friday 12 September 2025
We expect your Final Report and evidence of expenditure by:	Friday 28 February 2025	Friday 26 September 2025
You must complete the Annual Museum Survey 2025 by:	Spring/ summer 2025 (dates tbc)	Spring/ summer 2025 (dates tbc)

- Applications must be made using our Application Form which can be found on our website [www.mdmidlands.org.uk](http://www.mdmidlands.org.uk) or requested by emailing [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk)
- We will only accept applications submitted using our grant application form
- Remember to attach copies of supporting evidence such as quotations with your application

- We will only provide funding for costs and activity once MDM has received your signed copy of the Grant Offer Letter
- We will acknowledge receipt of your application within three working days. If you haven't heard from us after this time, please contact us immediately.
- If you wish to discuss your application, or have any queries regarding the application process, please contact [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk)

**Other Grant Types:** *If you are applying for an individual CPD/ Conference Bursary, Strategic Grant (linked to MDM programmes) or a Responsive Grant – you will need to complete a different application form. See website or email [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk) for more details.*

## 5. How will grant applications be assessed?

This is a competitive application process. Each application will be assessed by an MDM Grants Panel who will consider your application against the following criteria:

- The activity is viable, achievable and clearly planned
- The grant fulfils a demonstrable need, which is clearly evidenced
- You provide a clear outline of the project aims and objectives and how it will be implemented and evaluated
- Your proposed costs are clearly set out and appropriate to the scale and nature of your application, including any match funding, and represent value for money
- The activity responds to one or more of the [Arts Council England \(ACE\) Investment Principles](#) – see section 3 of this guidance document for further information
- Activity is in line with existing museum forward plans or other key policy and planning documents, including Accreditation Development Areas
- Project is informed by MDM training/ support/ recommendations. Priority will be given to organisations who have actively engaged in MDM training, programmes, advice or support
- Application demonstrates 10% match funding towards total project cost
- The project will be completed on time with potential risks to delay identified and mitigated

### **Applicants will also be asked to demonstrate how they have considered:**

- Best practice when working with freelancers/ consultants
- Environmental sustainability
- Issues around equity, diversity and inclusivity

The Grant Panel's decision is final. Museums will be notified of decisions on the date specified above.

## 6. Budget and Funding

- The maximum amount an individual museum can apply for as an Open Small Grant is **£5,000**
- The grant cannot be used for match funding
- We will pay you 100% of the grant via BACS payment once we have received your signed acceptance of the grant terms and conditions

Please note that the maximum grant amount available is different for conference bursaries and CPD grants, responsive grants or strategic grants linked to programming.

### **Will the grant cover VAT?**

The grant will cover VAT that you cannot recover from HM Revenue and Customs.

- VAT registered museums should show all costs and claims exclusive of VAT
- Museums not registered for VAT should show all costs and claims inclusive of VAT
- You must send us all appropriate invoices (with VAT or without VAT) when submitting your final accounts

### **Please Note:**

- There is a total budget of £85,000 available in the financial year 2024-25 for Open Small Grants comprising: £57,000 from the core Museum Development ACE funding and an additional £28,000 from Art Fund for eligible schemes\*
- We encourage applicants to carefully consider the value of their grant requested in order to support as many museums as possible
- We recommend that you discuss your application with a member of the MDM team before you submit it

*\*Eligible schemes funded by Art Fund are Audience Development Grants and Workforce Development Grants.*

## **7. Reporting and Accountability**

### **Applicants must:**

- Agree to the grant terms and conditions set out in the grant application form
- Complete a short evaluation monitoring form at the end of the activity to demonstrate that the project aims and objectives have been delivered. An evidence of expenditure form must also be submitted, including copies of receipts or completed invoices.
- Complete the Annual Museum Survey for 2024-25 which will run summer 2025
- Acknowledge funding from ACE and MDM on all print and online marketing materials using the wording and logo we will provide.

Museums we support will be expected to share their learning with other museums. This could include:

- Providing a written case study or newsletter article
- Contributing to a network or Coffee and Connect session

## **8. Contact Information**

If you wish to discuss your application, or have any queries regarding the application process, please contact [grants@mdmidlands.org.uk](mailto:grants@mdmidlands.org.uk)

## **9. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Please see the [FAQ document](#)

## **10. Additional Resources**

### **Working with Freelancers/ Consultants**

MDM 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 the [best practice guidance](#) developed by [South West Museum Development](#) in partnership with Museum Freelance.

Successful applicants will be expected to uphold the [Principles for Working with Freelancers](#) as part of the terms and conditions of their award.

### **Digital Culture Network**

ACE's Digital Culture Network provides practical guides, training and support to museums, helping you to explore and harness the benefits of technology to achieve your goals

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-digital-culture/digital-culture-network>

### **Julie's Bicycle**

ACE's partner Julie's Bicycle developed a Museums Framework to support museums in developing environmental practice <https://juliesbicycle.com/resource-museums-framework-2017/>

### **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Resources**

<https://mdwm.org.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-resources/>

Museum Development Midlands have a list of useful EDI resources