

Rochdale Borough Culture Network – Small Grants Fund 2025/26

Round 2

Priority: Creative Projects & Activity

The Rochdale Borough Culture Network aims to support individual artists & arts organisations, as well as voluntary groups, faith and social enterprises that widen access to arts & culture in the borough.

Artists and organisation can apply for a maximum of £800, which is aimed at:

- Funding for Rochdale-based artists / arts organisations to develop a creative project or activity

By 'Creative Project or Activity' we are referring to any sort of creative activity or output, including, but not limited to:

- Theatre / Music / Dance Performances
- Visual Arts Exhibitions / Workshops
- Film / Digital Media
- Creative Writing / Spoken Word
- Community or participatory workshops
- Interdisciplinary arts
- Outdoor arts, festivals and events

Examples of projects that we have funded in the past include:

- A voluntary sector organisation providing creative sessions to a community group
- A comedy event that celebrates performers with diverse lived experiences including identifying as LGBTQ+, neurodiverse and mental ill-health
- An exhibition of work by local artists – open to the public, with an opportunity to connect with professional artists.

Criteria:

We will assess applications ability to deliver a creative project or activity through the following criteria:

- The application demonstrates a strong connection to Rochdale borough.
- The project or activity will engage audiences (live or digital) across the borough or beyond
- The project or activity will widen access to creativity including traditionally under-served communities, including, but not exclusive to communities at risk of racial inequalities, disabled, LGBTQ+ and communities experiencing poverty
- The creative project or activity is feasible and realistic, including details of any partners, venues or collaborators
- The artist / organisation demonstrates existing skills and experience to deliver this project or activity.
- The relevant Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Insurance policies are in place, if required
- The budget is realistic and manageable.

Please note, RBCN are committed to ensuring artists are paid fairly and adequately for their work. We are open to applications that support artists to be artists, including paying an adequate fee, investing in development as well as materials.

We are particularly interested in funding artists and organisations who have limited access to other funds

Balancing:

Alongside scoring individual applications on how well they meet the criteria, we will also seek to fund work in a diverse range of art-forms, led by artists and arts-organisations who represent the diversity of our borough, based across all 4 townships, and work that engages and reaches diverse audiences.

The deadline is **Wednesday 22nd October at 10am**

How to Apply

To apply, please complete the attached application form and return it to Cartwheel Arts, who will administrate this Small Grants Fund. You may apply in any of the following ways:

Word Document: Download the word document and return via email to rbcn@cartwheelarts.org.uk

WhatsApp Voice Note Application: You can complete the application form via WhatsApp Voice-note. To do this, please first telephone 01706 361300 and ask to speak to Hebe Reilly, and we will provide you with a mobile number to send Voice Notes to for this application. If you require any additional support with the application, please contact Gil via rbcn@cartwheelarts.org.uk

Terms & Conditions

This funding is aimed at artists and arts organisations who are based in Rochdale Borough. Please note, applicants whose work predominately takes place outside of Rochdale Borough will not be eligible.

Each applicant can apply for a maximum of £800. We have a total of £3,200 in the Small Grants Fund to distribute. Applicants are welcome to apply for less than £800.

Applicants may only submit 1 application to the 2025 Small Grants Fund Round 2. We will not fund the same individual / organisation or project twice.

As RBCN only have limited funds to distribute each year, and the Small Grants fund is aimed at artists and organisations who may not have access to other arts funding, our criteria is as follows:

- Applicants who are successfully awarded an Arts Council Project Grant Match Fund by RBCN in this financial year (1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026) will not be eligible to apply for the Small Grants Fund
- Applicants who were successful in the RBCN Small Grants 2025/26 Round 1 are not eligible to apply for Round 2
- Applicants who are successful with the 2025/26 GM Arts Bursary Round 3 are not eligible to apply for the Small Grants
- These rules apply to each financial year and will be re-set from 1st April 2026.

For clarification, please contact Hebe Reilly via hebe@cartwheelarts.org.uk

The RBCN Small Grants fund is made possible thanks to support from the Rochdale Borough Council and Your Trust. The funds are managed by Cartwheel on behalf of the Rochdale Borough Culture Network.

Time-Frame:

Deadline: Wednesday 22nd October 2025 at 10am

Results: Mid-November 2025

Reporting Deadline: 31st December 2026 (a simple monitoring & report form will be provided to successful applicants)