

## Newcastle CCZ Workspace Small Grant Scheme Round 1

A key objective for the Zone is to increase the amount of physical space where cultural and creative practitioners and businesses can come together to work, collaborate, rehearse, and perform. Through our CCZ Workspace Small Grants scheme, we aim to encourage potential workspace providers and property owners to bring forward plans that will result in a net increase in workspace predominantly for the use of the culture and creative sectors. The investment may directly lead to an increase in new workspace, or it may accelerate the development of plans for the creation of new workspace. Proposals that do neither will not be considered.

The list below provides an example of types of expenditure our grants may be able to support, but this is not exhaustive:

- Feasibility studies
- Market research
- Planning fees
- Fit out costs (e.g., physical improvements to properties)
- Accessibility improvements (e.g., fire escapes, lifts)
- Furniture and equipment (if part of a wider improvement scheme)

The following criteria will apply:

- The investment must be focused on a commercial property or properties based within the Newcastle Culture and Creative Zone. By 'commercial', we mean the primary purpose for the space is to accommodate economic activity (e.g., studio workshops). Where the primary use is something other than 'commercial', for instance residential housing, we would not support.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate what their grant would be spent on (e.g., physical improvements; fixed capital equipment; or professional fees) that will clearly accelerate the refurbishment or occupation of a specific property or properties. Where appropriate, applicants may be required to provide evidence of the available 'commercial workspace' prior to the investment and after the investment. Following grant award, applicants may also be required to monitor and report details of the take-up of this space, including details of occupiers and their headcount.
- The grant will typically be paid retrospectively once evidence of spend has been provided; though we will consider providing an element of the grant up-front should the applicant make a sufficiently strong argument for it.
- The applicant will be expected to contribute towards funding at least 20% of the overall cost of the investment. For instance, if an applicant wishes to apply for a grant of £8,000, they must be able to demonstrate how they have already or will in the future contribute £2,000 of their own money towards to overall cost of the investment.
- We expect to award individual grants of no greater than £15,000, with the majority of grant awards likely to be considerably lower. In exceptional circumstances we may be willing to consider grants worth more than £15,000. This will be entirely at our discretion and may require additional evidence and monitoring requirements.

- There is no minimum grant award; but strategic fit will be more difficult to justify for very small projects.
- We expect project costs to be external costs to the applicant. We will not reimburse internal charges e.g., internal staff time.
- Only one grant will be awarded per applicant within this round of funding. Grant recipients may be able to apply for further funding at a later stage at our discretion.
- Applicants must be able to explain why grant funding is needed and explain why the work would not go ahead, or progress more slowly without a grant.
- Applicants must be able to explain how the investment will deliver economic and social outputs and benefits (e.g., numbers of culture and creative businesses (inc. freelancers) accommodated, numbers of culture and creative businesses growing in turnover or headcount, number of new culture and creative jobs or businesses created and supported, providing new culture and creative content, reaching new / bigger audiences).

Businesses are **not** eligible for support if:

- They are in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made
- The award of grant would breach subsidy allowance limits

Audit checks will take place where you may be asked to support the evidence supplied. Should applicants be unable to provide satisfactory evidence, your application may be refused. If you have already received a grant, you will be required to return this to the Council. We reserve the right to request additional evidence at any time.

### **Grant Award Process**

The level of funding available is limited and demand is expected to be high. Grants will be awarded in line with the eligibility criteria set out above, but we retain the right to amend or close the scheme at any time.

Grant awards will be made at the levels set out above to applicants satisfying the above eligibility criteria, subject to the availability of resources.

Potential applicants must first express an interest in the scheme by contacting [businesssupport@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:businesssupport@newcastle.gov.uk). Applicants will then be sent an application form. Within this form, applicants will be required to confirm they are eligible for the scheme.

Applications will be considered by a panel who will review each on a case-by-case basis; and reach a view based on the strategic value of the investment in the wider context of the Culture and Creative Zone. This assessment will consider whether the outputs that will be achieved by each grant (i.e., new workspace created, and by extension direct and indirect jobs created) will directly or indirectly contribute towards strategic Newcastle CCZ output targets and provide good value for money. The panel may decide to approve, reject, or ask for further clarification or amendments to the proposals. There is no appeals process.

Successful applicants will receive written confirmation stating that by accepting the grant payment, they confirm they are eligible for the grant scheme, including that any payments accepted will be subject to subsidy control requirements. Payments will be made directly to approved recipients'

bank accounts by electronic transfer (typically via BACs). Failure to deliver any output targets set may result in clawback.

### **Subsidy Control**

The United Kingdom has now left the European Union, and there is a new UK subsidy control regime. The previous State aid rules no longer apply in most circumstances.

Under this new subsidy control regime, the Council is permitted to award an individual/organisation up to approximately £315,000 (as of January 2023) in the elapsed part of the current financial year, and the two financial years immediately preceding the current financial year.

Funding is subject to this allowance not being exceeded during that period. This £315,000 allowance also includes any previous funding you/your organisation received as de minimis State aid (under the previous regime). Applicants will be required to declare any such subsidy/aid received in the last three years.

(Further information on this allowance can be found within [Section 7.2 of the guidance](#))

Where this limit has been exceeded, it may still be possible for the Council to provide funding support. Applicants in this position should contact [businesssupport@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:businesssupport@newcastle.gov.uk) for further details.

This document is available in large print. Please contact us to request a copy.

[businesssupport@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:businesssupport@newcastle.gov.uk)

### **This project is part funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority**

The North of Tyne Combined Authority is a partnership of three local authorities: Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, and Northumberland County Council and the North of Tyne Elected Mayor.

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