

# Frequently Asked Questions:

## Shaped by Community Commission

### Questions about project criteria

#### What main things are you looking for in the application?

First of all, your project needs to be a creative, artistic or cultural project. That can be in the broadest sense – such as theatre, dance, painting, etc. But it can also be about creativity in gardening, languages, sport, food and culture more widely, and the way these topics connect people and places.

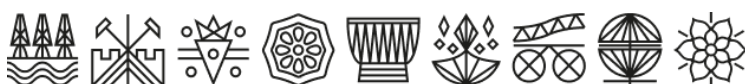
Second, your project needs to be based in Newham. We can only fund activities that happen in Newham. You can work with partners from outside Newham, but explain in your application why you want to work with them.

Finally, your project needs to be shaped by community. How do you know that the community wants and needs this event? What evidence do you have? Show this in your application. That can be because you're a member of the community yourself and you know people have asked for it. Or you may have worked within that community for a long time. Or perhaps you have done some consultation research. Anything that helps you to show that the community you want to work within is keen for this project to happen and can actively shape it with you.

#### How tied to culture and arts does the project have to be?

This link is important to us. We get our funding from Arts Council England, and this means all projects we commission do have to be creative, artistic or cultural. Our panel will therefore be looking out for activities that feature these elements. If your project doesn't make an obvious connection to arts, culture or creativity, it will be helpful to explain in your application how you are interpreting these terms or why you believe your project is cultural, creative or artistic.

#### When can projects run until?



Ideally, your project should finish before March 2025, but if you have a different timeline in mind and you need a short extension to that, we can likely be flexible. Make sure to indicate your extension request on your application. We are reluctant to give extensions that go beyond May 2025.

**We are planning part of our project to happen in late summer 2024 already. Can we apply for work that happens before we would know the outcome of the application?**

No, your work should take place after we announce the successful projects on 15 July 2024. In fact, we also need a little bit of time in July/August to set you up on your systems and do your contract, so we expect projects to run between September 2024 and March 2025. There are ways to get you set up a bit quicker, so let us know in your application if you need that, but this will also depend on your own speed in getting us the info we need to set you up. In short, we can be a little flexible with the timelines, but having large parts of your project happening before 15 July will make your project ineligible.

**It says the project should be free to access. How do you define free events? For example, can we partner with local restaurants, who would charge for food, even though our activities would be free?**

Making your project free to access is one of our criteria. This means people should be able to join your event for free. It's fine to charge for extra elements at your event, like food, as long as people aren't forced to buy it as part of their experience. For example, if you are putting on a performance at a cafe, the performance should be free to attend, but if the cafe wants to charge for ice cream during the performance intermission, that's of course fine.

Please also note that if people need a referral to attend your event, that means it isn't publicly accessible. The same goes for if you have to be a member, or get a membership, to attend.

**Can I target specific communities or does everything have to be open to the general public?**

Your project does not need to target every single person in Newham, but should be open to them. It is fine to choose to focus on a particular community, age group or area, and come up with an offer that is tailored to them. However, if other people were interested in taking part, they should be allowed to do so.

For instance, it is fine to run events for children, as long as it is in a park where any family could join in. But if you ran those events at a school yard where only families who go to that particular school are allowed to enter, that wouldn't be publicly accessible and therefore not be eligible. So



it is fine to narrow down your community group, but there shouldn't be any barriers for joining that group. For that same reason, all events should also be free for people to attend and people should not need a membership or a referral to take part in your project.

We do, however, understand that your invitation to your audiences can change throughout the project. For example, you might start off with a public open call for participants who are interested in making a theatre play with you, then close that group once you have people to work with and are doing rehearsals, and then open up your performances to the general public again when you're ready to share it. As long as anyone had a chance to sign up at the beginning and to see the final output, that would be considered as a project that is open to the public.

### **Is there a priority to support a percentage of the community in Newham that is disenfranchised or that are from minority groups?**

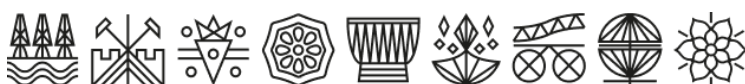
All of our projects are chosen by our Community Voices Panel, which is made up of a representative group of people from Newham. It is central to the mission of our organisation, including the Community Voices Panel, to make sure the work commissioned is reaching people who don't always have the opportunity to engage with culture and are often disenfranchised in other ways too.

Inclusivity is one of the key parts of the [Community Voices Panel's manifesto](#). It's at the forefront of how they think about programming. The projects our panel have chosen, and we have commissioned, so far are highly diverse, with different ethnicities and cultures celebrated. By far the majority of them work with communities that are often disenfranchised.

So, although inclusivity is not something we've explicitly asked for in the project criteria, we feel that by asking for projects that show a need from Newham based-communities, we are catering for disenfranchised voices. We trust that you know your community best, and that you know who needs a project most. Your rationale for your project will be an important element that our Community Voices Panel will look at in their selection process.

### **Can my project happen in spaces that aren't in Newham?**

No, all activity must happen within the geographical borough of Newham. Even if the building you want to use is owned by a Newham-based organisation but is situated outside of Newham, it won't be eligible. All of your activities must have a Newham postcode, unless they happen online.



## Questions about applicant criteria

### **We don't have any partners on our team who are constituted organisations, can we still apply?**

We are keen that at least one of your partners is a constituted organisation (e.g. business, charity, CIC, etc), as we would like them to be the admin lead of the project who receives our payment. We are reluctant to share full budgets with individuals (e.g. freelancers or self-employed people), as there is less financial accountability in these cases. If you struggle to have a constituted partner on your team, do mention that on your application and we can find a payment structure that works for your project. We will then usually consider one of the following options with you:

- We'll first see if there is a way to bring additional partners on board or if it is possible to set you up as a company for this project.
- If you're set up as a self-employed freelancer, we can also consider paying freelancers in smaller instalments, to minimise risks around accountability.
- We could also pay you the costs at the end of the project rather than the start. This means we would pay you back for the costs, but you might be out of pocket while waiting for reimbursement, and that doesn't work for everyone of course.
- We can connect you to an organisation that can stand in as your admin lead. It's something that organisations like Compost offer sometimes. They wouldn't then be part of the partnership, but would just hold your budget and pay you out when you need it. Sometimes they charge a small amount for that service, usually around 4% of the budget they'd hold for you, which you can include as a projected cost.

We will figure out the best solution for your project together with you. Your registered status is not a selection criterion and so noting your set up on your application does not influence the decision of whether your project is successful. We just ask for the information to help us prepare a set up that works best for you.

### **Can organisations of all sizes apply?**

This commissioning opportunity is open to organisations of any size.

### **Can you apply if you're a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)?**

Yes, you can apply if you're a CIO organisation. By 'registered organisation' we mean any type of organisational registration, which may include but is not limited to registered limited companies, charities, CICs or CIOs. We just want to see that you have a bank account and a basic level of governance around it, but the beginning of this section explains what options you have if you don't have such registration.



## Questions about budgets and payments

### What are you looking for in the breakdown of costs?

Your budget or breakdown of costs can cover lots of things:

- It's fine to include staff costs for your project. We assume you would pay people and reimburse them for the time they spend organising the project and events, and to not run everything as unpaid volunteers. We really want you to pay yourself and your artists fairly. (See the two questions below).
- Staff costs can also include vouchers to reimburse young people for their time.
- You can put things like catering, materials, and venue hire in your project budget.
- You can also include travel costs, although because it's a project run by people from Newham and happens in Newham, we don't expect travel costs to make up a large proportion of your budget.
- You can also include administrative elements, like certain training, licences, or DBS checks in your budget. However, you should explain how they are necessary for the delivery of your particular project with us.
- The 'Shaped by Community' commission is a project grant, so all funding you use has to be related to the delivery of your project. However, up to 5% of the budget can be for more generic core costs, like running the office, paying office bills, or having internet and computers. You can add that as a line as a 'management fee'. This should not be more than 5% of your overall budget and can only be included in your budget once (i.e. not for each project partner separately).

### Can staff costs be covered in our project budget?

Yes, you can cover staff costs that are incurred to achieve the delivery of your project. This may include time for producers, facilitators, artists, project management, etc. Your budget will need to show how staff hours contribute to the delivery of the project.

We are also keen you pay your project staff fairly. For instance, for artist fees we would encourage you to use the day rates that the [Artist Union England](https://www.artistunion.org.uk/) recommends.

### Can I pay myself?

Yes. The staff time – for you or for others on your team – that it takes to manage the day-to-day running of your project can be included as a staff cost in your budget. In community-led projects we often see that project leads omit themselves from their budget because perhaps they don't



realise that they can pay themselves fairly or because they are choosing to not take money from something that may be a passion-led project, but we do not believe this to be a sustainable way to run projects. We encourage people to factor in their own project management time and include this in staff costs.

### **Can we include vouchers for young people in the costings?**

Yes, in your budget you can include vouchers to reimburse young people or other participants for their time.

### **Can generic office running costs or generic expenditure be covered in our project budget?**

Your budget should focus on all the costs that are directly linked to the delivery of your project. This may for example include travel, materials, venues, and staff costs.

However, on top of your budget, you may charge up to 5% as a management fee, which would include part of your costs for rent, bills, administration, sick leave, training, etc, or in other words, all costs that do not directly lead to your project outcomes but are necessary to do your work. This 5% should cover on-costs of all partners, you will not be able to charge 5% for each partner.

### **If we would apply for less, would that mean you could fund more projects?**

We are committed to spending £90,000 on our Shaped by Community programme overall, so if we get lots of proposals for under £15,000, we might be able to commission seven or eight projects, instead of six.

## **Questions about the application process**

### **Can we access the application in a Word document?**

Yes, we can send this to you as a word document. Please email Loose Baker, at [loose.baker@culturewithin.org.uk](mailto:loose.baker@culturewithin.org.uk) to request a copy.

### **When will we hear the outcome of the application?**

Applications open on 23rd February 2024 and close midday on 23rd April 2024. You can expect to hear from us regarding the shortlisting of your application by 31st May 2024. Successful



applicants will then be asked to submit the final version of their application by 13th June 2024, and we will then let you know the final outcome of the six successful applications by 15th July. Decisions on successful applicants will be made by the Culture Within Newham Community Voices Panel.

### **Can I get help with my application before I submit it?**

We are not offering tailored application surgeries in the first round, but there are a few ways we can support you with your application. Last year we ran an online 'Great Grant Writing' workshop which was recorded, so on request we can share this video with you and the supporting materials. We also offered two events to help inform your application, including an in-person 'Ideas Lab' on 26th March 2024 which included an interactive learning session on 'what it means to be shaped by community', as well as an online Q&A session on 3rd April 2024 for anyone to attend and ask questions. If you've missed these, you can also email Loose with any questions you may have on [loose.baker@culturewithin.org.uk](mailto:loose.baker@culturewithin.org.uk). During the second round of applications (after the initial shortlisting in May) we will offer 'surgery' slots where you can discuss your project with us and talk through ways to make it stronger.

### **Will there be any training or networking opportunities offered to successful applicants?**

There will be opportunities to meet the other projects at training opportunities and at a peer-to-peer learning event. We aim to be reactive to what the successful applicants need, so will tailor the content of any trainings based on who the successful applicants are. We expect these trainings and meetings will take up a maximum of 8 hours of your time across the entire project.

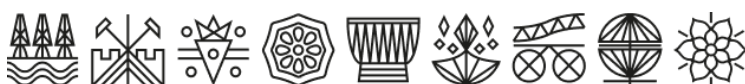
### **Can I apply with two different projects?**

You can put in as many applications as you like. It's unlikely our Community Voices Panel will commission two projects from the same applicant, but you could apply with both projects and let them decide, to spread your chances.

### **Can we apply for both the Summer of Wellbeing and the Shaped by Community commissioning opportunities?**

Yes, if you have applied for the Summer of Wellbeing commission, you are still eligible to also apply for the Shaped by Community commission.

### **Does Culture Within Newham offer more grants like this, or is this a one-off?**



Culture Within Newham has various funding opportunities coming up throughout the next two years. They might be similar to this one, though they might have a slightly different focus or theme to them each time. We also have a few opportunities for smaller commissions coming up later this year, including for micro-commissions and for projects that work with artists. We now have a website, which shows our [upcoming opportunities](#) as soon as they are launched. And you can [sign up to our newsletter](#) too, to be the first one to hear about new opportunities.

