

HELP

MUSICIANS^{UK}

DEVELOP

THEIR TALENT

Talent Programme

Emerging Excellence Awards

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Through the Help Musicians UK Talent Programme, we give grants, provide opportunities, and offer advice and endorsement to outstanding musicians in the final stages of training and the first few years of working professionally.

The programme's aim is to identify the UK's most talented emerging musicians in financial need and improve their chances of achieving successful, sustainable professional careers by providing timely investment and support.

Emerging Excellence Awards

The awards offer grants of up to £3,000 to help fund your development at the start of your career. Whether you're an unsigned band, a classical string quartet, a singer-songwriter or an urban performer – if you have the talent, these awards could be for you. We can support important development opportunities, projects or programmes of activity that will help take you to the next stage.

What we're looking for

We want to invest in talented emerging artists who are performing or creating great music and have the potential to build a distinctive and sustainable professional career.

This scheme is here to assist you in reaching the next level in your professional and creative development.

You must be able to demonstrate that you are already making an impact, for example through critical acclaim, a growing fanbase, prestigious gigs and collaborations, or prizes and awards.

We want to hear about your ambitions and how our funding and support can help you to achieve them.

We want our funded artists to be our ambassadors. Becoming an Emerging Excellence Artist is the starting point of an ongoing relationship. So we also want to hear how you can help us – whether it is spreading the word about what we do, volunteering, or helping us raise money.

Who can apply?

Musicians (including composers) and groups in the early stages of their career - usually in the first three years.

You will need to be:

- Committed to building a career in music
- Considered excellent by those in your field and already making an impact
- Able to prove you need help financially
- Over 18
- British or have lived in the UK for at least five consecutive years
- Based primarily in the UK

Where a group is applying, most members must meet the age and nationality criteria.

What can you apply for?

You can apply for a grant towards an important development opportunity, project or programme of activity that will have a lasting impact on your professional career.

Your proposal must include some element of **creative** development. Applications that are *solely* focused on business development (e.g. merchandise production, record distribution) or promotional activity will not be prioritised.

The minimum grant is £500 and the maximum available is £3,000.

Typical projects include:

- creative residencies (e.g. R&D)
- collaboration with other artists
- live multimedia productions
- national and international touring
- recording
- mentoring

Applications can include more than one type of activity as long as they are complementary and part of a coherent development plan. We are looking for a high level of entrepreneurialism and music that stands apart from the crowd.

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Please note that we can't fund:

- general living costs unrelated to a specific project
- purchases of musical instruments, software or any kind of equipment (including computer and audio-visual kit)
- one-off performances
- Further or Higher Education study costs (including living costs while studying)
- activity or expenditure taking place before an award has been offered
- applications that include no element of creative development
- companies or organisations (except emerging performing groups/collectives with a fixed membership)

We will not usually accept applications from those who have recently received another Help Musicians UK award. If you are a previous grant holder, please get in touch with us before applying.

How to apply

Please read these guidelines carefully and also refer to the Frequently Asked Questions on our website.

There is a two-stage application process. Your application will be assessed for eligibility by Help Musicians UK staff and considered by independent panels of musicians and music industry advisors.

Stage 1

Using the online form, you should submit your biography and a short proposal stating why we should invest in you right now, an outline of your proposed project and two audio or video tracks. If you don't have any suitable recordings, please get in touch to discuss alternative ways to support your application.

You must also ask an experienced music professional to support your application by providing a reference. All materials must be received by the closing date.

We will notify you within four weeks if you have been shortlisted for Stage 2.

Stage 2

You will be asked to submit a more detailed proposal and budget. If we have selected you for interview, you will be given the opportunity to pitch for a grant of up to £3,000.

Other shortlisted applicants will be able to apply for up to £1,500. At least 10% of your project budget should come from other sources such as performance fees, sponsorship or crowdfunding.

How will applications be assessed?

We will take into account:

- the quality of your music (as a writer, performer or creator)
- your track record and evidence of impact, such as critical acclaim, prizes or awards, calibre of collaborators and demand from promoters
- the impact our funding is likely to make at this point in your development
- the clarity of your artistic and career goals
- the quality of your proposal
- your level of financial need

We will be looking particularly for proposals that show:

- long-term vision with clearly-defined aims for professional and artistic development
- a collaborative and entrepreneurial approach
- creativity and innovation within your field
- good awareness of the realities of the marketplace