

Applying for support to tour and perform live

[Who are we?](#)

[How can Help Musicians support you to deliver touring & live activity?](#)

[Eligibility](#)

[Making an application](#)

Who are we?

Help Musicians is a charity that loves music and for 100 years has been working hard to make a meaningful difference to the lives of musicians across the UK. We want to create a world where musicians thrive.

We're here to support you

If you have any questions about the support we can offer, want to talk through your plans, or are looking for advice about the application process, you can book some time to talk it through with one of the team [here](#).

How can Help Musicians support you to tour & perform live?

At Help Musicians, we understand the impact live performance and touring can have on a musician's professional development. Touring and live activity is important for building your fanbase, increasing confidence, developing your performing skills as well as offering you a chance to test new ideas. In the future, you may find that touring could become an important part of your income generation.

Financial support is available to help you with the cost of touring where it is possible to show the clear impact it will have on your career development.

Financial support for touring & live activity

To help you with your touring & live activity, you can apply for up to £5,000 in financial support to assist with the cost of performing your music and getting it out to the world. This could cover your costs for:

- **Touring expenses** (accommodation, transport and fuel costs, venue hire, ticketing)
- **Session musician and crew fees** (stage manager, sound engineer, tour manager or lighting technician)
- **PR and marketing** (including social media campaigns)
- **Content creation** (video, audio, promotional photography, artwork and design etc.)

- **Merchandise** (design and production)
- **Access to creative spaces** (rehearsal and writing rooms)
- **Time to create**
- **Festival appearances** (but only if part of a tour)

We will pay for travel and accommodation for musicians wanting to play at festivals, however only if these appearances are part of a tour (ie. 2 or more dates)

Please note we will not subsidise your performance fees for unpaid festival appearances.

- **Costs of performance related technology and equipment*** (Speakers, amplifiers, headsets, microphones and projectors etc).

*Equipment costs should not make up any more than 50% of your budget. Please note we are unable to fund the purchase of musical instruments, including laptops.

- **Visas and carnets***

*Visas and carnets should not make up any more than 50% of your budget.

- **Insurance**

We can support a contribution towards your travel and contents insurance for the duration that you're on tour. You would need to work out the percentage of the total cost based on how many days you are going on tour for and detail your workings within the notes tab within the budget section of the application form.

Please note that we will not support the costs of vehicle insurance or public liability insurance.

We recognise that musicians work best when they maintain their creativity, health and careers simultaneously, so in addition to the financial support offered as part of this grant, you will receive business advice to help grow your business skills, and guidance on healthy practice to support you in maintaining your wellbeing.

Business advice

You will receive six hours of dedicated one-to-one business advice from industry experts, who are there to help you to shape or rethink your business plans. You may be wondering how to promote your next tour, be looking to find new ways to distribute your music or build an online fanbase.

We'll pair you with up to two expert business advisors who can help you with a range of topics. You can read an explanation of what these topics include on our blog [here](#).

Support to manage your health and wellbeing

In partnership with the British Association of Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM), you will be able to access an hour's free mentoring with a coach or psychotherapist who has a background in performing arts. This mentoring session is based around a healthy practice diary which guides the conversation around goal setting, motivation and wellbeing. You will also be able to attend community drop-in events for on-going peer support as well as attend skills workshops in maintaining your vocal, physical and mental health to prevent injury and stay well when you are performing.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

Professional musicians of all genres and disciplines, with a focus on independent musicians who are controlling one or more aspects of their career (e.g. self-managing, self-releasing, self-producing). You can be a solo artist, composer, group member, songwriter, producer or a multidisciplinary artist. This is not a fund for organisations.

To apply you must:

- Deliver your supported activities within 12 months of accepting the grant – please note, your activity should not start any earlier than **three months** from the submission of your application
- Be aged over 18
- Be in financial need and without significant backing (by this we mean not receiving significant financial backing from a record label, publisher or private investor and not having over £16,000 in savings)
- Have control over one or more aspects of your career (e.g. self-managing, self-releasing or self-producing)
- Already have an active career and be able to clearly demonstrate your work to date
- Be a UK resident*

* We refer to the UK residency rules noting that you are eligible for our support:

*Help Musicians refers to the UK residency rules noting that you are eligible for our support: If you are a UK national living in the UK you automatically qualify. If you are a non-UK National, you need to have the legal right to live and work in the UK.

If applying as a group

- 50% must meet the 'who can apply' criteria
- You must have been established and playing together regularly for at least 1 year
- The group should be made up of no more than six members

Ineligible activities

There are a number of activities we are unable to support through this strand of our work, listed below. Please read through this section thoroughly before applying.

- We are unable to support the same type of activity (i.e., recording and release, skills and development, music-led creative collaborations or touring/live) within the same 12 month period, therefore if you have received support for touring and live activity within the past 12 months, you are not able to apply.
- Applications relating to loss of income as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak
- Applicants who are already receiving significant financial backing
- Activities that are not primarily live music performance focused
- Formal courses of study, training or research

- Attendance at any international or UK showcases (SXSW CMJ, A3C, WOMEX, Reeperbahn, Folk Alliance International, MIDEM, Canadian Music Week, The Great Escape, Liverpool Sound City)
- One off festival appearances that are not part of a tour (ie. 2 or more dates)
- Subsidising performance/musicians fees to attend unpaid performances
- Ongoing overheads, for example rent and utility bills.
- Buying or insuring vehicles
- Although we won't exclude applications that are asking us to contribute to a wider project, this application shouldn't be seen as a top-up fund for larger funding bids. (10% of your total budget or less would be considered as top-up funding)
- Costs associated with entering competitions
- Activities that have already occurred
- Costs relating to the purchase of musical instruments (including laptops) and/or the upgrade/maintenance of existing instruments
- Applications where equipment costs are more than 50% of grant
- Applications that are solely for visas and/or carnets
- We will not support musicians with costs towards planned tours or live performances in Russia or Belarus with state-sponsored and/or state-funded venues or companies.

Making an application

To apply for this support, you can start your application [here](#).

We understand that musicians will have different preferences in how they communicate their ideas, so you can choose to answer some of the key questions either in writing or by video upload. [Check out our blog](#) to understand more about video applications.

What are we looking for in the application?

Biography

We want to understand your career in performing or creating music so far. Show us your achievements and career highlights, share what you're proud of. Bear in mind that we won't know you or your music, so the clearer you can be and the more examples you can give us the better! This can include performances, collaborations, tours, festivals, showcases, commissions, recent releases, reviews (inc. press quotes & radio play), evidence of your growing fanbase (mailing list subscribers, social media followers) and prizes or awards. Remember to share links to any websites or socials you want us to see. You have space for up to 8 links.

Your activity

The details of the activity you're applying for financial support towards. Remember to include a timeline and double-check that it's achievable. E.g., don't give yourself a week to deliver your marketing plan.

Impact

Our support is here to help you make the next step, so we're looking to understand why this activity is crucial for your career at this point. Help us to understand what

you are trying to achieve in the short and long-term through the activity and how it will benefit your progression as a musician.

Business advice

When considering your business support options let us know why support in these areas will help your personal and professional growth.

Musical submissions

You will be asked to provide examples of your music in the form of recordings, videos and weblinks. At least one must be from within the last 12 months and you should submit the music you feel best demonstrates your creative direction at this time. Does the musical quality of this recording best represent your creative potential?

Budget

We know a budget can be tricky but it's also incredibly useful for focusing and understanding your plans. Try to think about the costs associated with each activity in the project. Make it clear where you require financial assistance from Help Musicians, as well as elements that may be supported by other organisations or yourself. It isn't a requirement to have all of your costs confirmed, however we would recommend seeking quotes in advance of your application to help with your budget planning.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment and back-up planning is vital when planning a tour or a live project. As part of your application, you will be asked to complete a risk assessment form which you can download [here](#). We encourage you to consider the unexpected things that could potentially occur when planning your project as well as evaluate the impact level, likelihood, and actions you might take should these issues arise. For example have you considered COVID restrictions in other countries or have you thought about how long it might take to acquire a visa. Support guidance for this is available via our [blog post](#).

Please note: If applying after a break or a change in circumstance we will take into consideration your past achievements, but you will also need to demonstrate that you are committed to reinvigorating and sustaining your career as a musician.

After applying

Applications will be shortlisted internally and presented to a panel of industry experts. The final decisions will be based on how well you have scored against each area in the application form and the strength of your music. Applicants will be notified of the outcome within 8-10 weeks.

You will receive a confirmation email once you submit your application. If you haven't received this then please get in touch with support@helpmusicians.org.uk who can check for you.

Please also email the team if something has changed in your plans after having submitted your application.

If your application is not successful you are able to re-apply as soon as you are ready. We advise you to read the guidance notes and blogs and book a phone call with a member of our team [here](#).