 Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent and Promise) visas – Eligibility criteria

The Arts Council is a Designated Competent Body appointed by the Home Office, and is therefore able to assess applications from artists for Tier 1 visas and recommend whether an applicant merits a visa.

The Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa route covers applicants working in the fields of science, engineering, humanities and the arts.

An arts applicant for a visa under the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route must provide evidence to demonstrate to the satisfaction and understanding of the UK Competent Body that they are either:

- a world leader in their field (Exceptional Talent); or
- have the potential to become a world leader in their field (Exceptional Promise), except within the film, television, animation, post production and visual effects industry (see below)

The following criteria apply only to arts applicants who will be assessed by the Arts Council. These criteria will apply to all applicants making a Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) application in the current financial year, 2013-14. They are subject to annual review and as a result may change for applicants applying in future years.

Eligibility criteria

In order to enter the UK through the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route you must either be established as, or demonstrate potential to become, a world-leading artist and/or an internationally recognised expert in your field within the arts (encompassing dance, music, theatre, visual arts and literature), museums or galleries. The Exceptional Talent route is also open to the film or television, animation, post production and visual effects industry, but applications for Exceptional Promise are not accepted in these fields.

You must be able to demonstrate that you are professionally engaged in producing work of outstanding quality which has been published (other than exclusively in newspapers or magazines), performed, presented, distributed or exhibited internationally.
Successful applicants will be currently engaged professionally as practitioners in their field and able to evidence a substantial or developing track record at a high level in at least one country other than their country of residence. We expect applicants to demonstrate recent and regular activity.

**How to provide evidence of exceptional talent or exceptional promise**

Applicants to the scheme must provide the following documents to support their application:
1. Evidence of exceptional talent / promise in their field (see details below); and
2. Letters of endorsement (see details below)

To demonstrate Exceptional Talent / Promise within the fields of arts, museums or galleries; or Exceptional Talent within film and television you must meet the following criteria:

1. **Provide evidence that your work is of exceptional quality and has national or international recognition as set out below:**

   This must consist of **no more than ten documents** in total (such documents can include for example, web links) to support **two or more** of the following:

   For film, television, animation, post production and visual effects industry evidence for this section please see Appendix 1.

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<th>Exceptional talent</th>
<th>Exceptional promise</th>
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<td><strong>1)</strong> Examples of significant media recognition such as features, articles and/or reviews from national publications or broadcasting companies in at least one country other than your country of residence. Event listings or advertisements are not acceptable.</td>
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<td><strong>2)</strong> Proof of having won international awards for excellence e.g. The Booker Prize, Grammy Award; and/or</td>
<td><strong>2)</strong> Proof of having won or been nominated / shortlisted for international awards for excellence</td>
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domestic awards in another country e.g. Tony Award. It remains for the Arts Council to judge whether a particular award provides appropriate evidence of international recognition in your field.

e.g. The Booker Prize, Grammy Award; and/or domestic awards in another country e.g. Tony Award. It remains for the Arts Council to judge whether a particular award provides appropriate evidence of recognition in your field.

3) Proof of appearances, performances, publications or exhibitions in the past five years in contexts which are recognised as internationally significant in your field and/or evidence of extensive international distribution and audiences for your work. It remains for the Arts Council to judge whether such appearances, performances, exhibitions or distribution provide appropriate evidence of international significance in your field.

3) Proof of appearances, performances, publications or exhibitions in the past three years in contexts which are internationally recognised in your field and/or evidence of international distribution and audiences for your work. It remains for the Arts Council to judge whether such appearances, performances, exhibitions or distribution provide appropriate evidence of international recognition in your field.

### 2. Provide letters of endorsement as set out below:

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<th>Exceptional promise</th>
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<td>Provide two letters of endorsement (as described below) from established arts/cultural organisations, institutions or companies with a national or international reputation and recognised expertise in your specialist field. At least one of these must be from a UK body. Acceptable organisations would be those which are well established nationally and/or internationally, work</td>
<td>Provide three letters of endorsement (as described below), at least two of which must be from established arts/cultural organisations, institutions or companies and one of which may be from an eminent individual with recognised expertise in your specialist field. At least one of these letters must be from a UK body or individual.</td>
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with many international artists each year and are widely acknowledged as possessing expertise in their field.

Acceptable organisations or individuals would be those which are well established nationally and/or internationally and widely acknowledged as possessing expertise in their field.

Our assessment of Exceptional Promise applications will place greater weighting on letters of endorsement.

All letters of endorsement must:

(a) be written on headed paper, dated, and signed by the author who must be an authorised member of the organisation such as the Chief Executive, Artistic Director, Principal or Chair
(b) include details of the author’s credentials (for example, a CV/resume) and how they know the applicant (personal relationship or reputation)
(c) detail the applicant’s achievements in their specialist field and how in the opinion of the author they have either:
   i) demonstrated that they are a world leader in their field (Exceptional Talent); or
   ii) demonstrated that they have the potential to become a world leader in their field (Exceptional Promise)
(d) describe how the applicant would benefit from living in the UK and the contribution they could make to cultural life here. Please provide details of any future professional engagements in the UK that you are aware of.
(e) include full contact details of the author including personal email address and direct telephone number so that personal contact can be made

Letters of endorsement must be written specifically for this purpose and include all of the information detailed above. A general all-purpose reference letter is not acceptable.

Arts Council England
October 2013
Appendix 1:
Exceptional talent criteria for film, television, animation, post production and visual effects industry (Talent only, not Promise)

Please provide evidence that you meet at least one of the following three criteria:

1) Major award or nomination
Within the last five (5) years from the year of application received a Nomination for an:
- Academy Award
- BAFTA
- Golden Globe
- Emmy Award

(Please note, you are not eligible to apply if outside the five-year time frame if you only received a nomination).

If an applicant has won an Academy Award, BAFTA, Golden Globe or Emmy Award there is no time frame allocated to the meeting the criteria.

Please provide:
(a) full details of the production nominated / award including category and year of nomination / award
(b) evidence of your involvement if the nomination / award was as part of a group
(c) the credit you received for the nomination / award

2) Significant and Direct Contribution
Explaining 'significant and direct contribution' to an award which (in the last five years) has won or been nominated for one or more of the following:
- Academy Award
- BAFTA
- Golden Globe
- Emmy Award

The named person on the award(s) or nomination(s) must evidence the 'exceptional talent contribution', i.e. they will demonstrate that the applicant has
significantly influenced or directly resulted in the award(s) or nomination(s) of the named person.
Notable Industry Recognition
To qualify for 'notable industry recognition', the applicant must:

a. demonstrate international distribution sales and recognition, and
b. must have achieved (in the last five years) one of the following combinations of awards and/or nominations from the notable industry recognition awards (listed below):

i. Won a minimum of two;
ii. Won one and been nominated for a minimum of two;
iii. Been nominated for a minimum of three

Notable Industry Recognition Awards:

- Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTS)
- BAFTA Cymru
- BAFTA Games Awards
- BAFTA Interactive Awards
- BAFTA Scotland
- BAFTA Television Craft Awards
- Berlin International Film Festival
- BFI London Film Festival
- Brit Awards
- Cannes International Film Festival / Festival de Cannes
- DICE Awards organised by the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences
- Edinburgh International Film Festival
- Fédération Internationale de la Presse Cinématographique or International Film Critics Award given by the International Federation of Film Critics
- GDC Awards
- Grammy Awards
- Sundance Film Festival
- IGF Awards
- Independent Spirit Awards
- Independent Music Awards
- International Film Music Critics Association Awards
- Satellite Awards
- Saturn Awards
- Toronto International Film Festival
- The Annime Awards
- Venice International Film Festival
- Visual Effects Society Awards