



Department for  
Business & Trade

**Department for Business and Trade**

# **The Arts and Culture Streamlined Subsidy Scheme**

January 2026

*Paper to lie before both Houses of Parliament for a period of 40 days, during which time either House may resolve that the scheme be not approved.*



Department for Business and Trade

# **The Arts and Culture Streamlined Subsidy Scheme**

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 10 (5) of the Subsidy Control Act  
2022

January 2026

*Paper to lie before both Houses of Parliament for a period of 40 days, during which time either  
House may resolve that the scheme be not approved.*



© Crown copyright 2026

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/official-documents](https://www.gov.uk/official-documents).

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at [enquiries@businessandtrade.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@businessandtrade.gov.uk)

# Arts and Culture Streamlined Route: scheme document

## 1. Introduction and compliance with the subsidy control principles

1.1. The Secretary of State, having considered the subsidy control principles in accordance with Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (“the Act”) and being of the view that the subsidies given under the scheme will be consistent with those principles, makes the following subsidy scheme (“the Scheme”) as a streamlined subsidy scheme for the purposes of the Act, in accordance with section 10(4) of the Act.

1.1. The Scheme is made on 12 January 2026

1.2. The Scheme may be used by any public authority in the United Kingdom to give subsidies on or after 12 January 2026 until 11 January 2032.

1.2. The Scheme is to be laid in Parliament in accordance with section 10(5) of the Act and published on the subsidy database in accordance with section 33(1)(b) of the Act.

1.3. The Scheme may be referred to as the Arts and Culture Streamlined Subsidy Scheme.

## 2. Purpose

2.1. The Scheme provides for the giving of subsidies that contribute to the following public policy objective:

2.1.1. Sustain the cultural ecosystem,

2.1.2. Support development and delivery of arts and culture activity in the short, medium and long term, or

2.1.3. Make such events, activities and spaces affordable and accessible to more people across the United Kingdom.

## 3. General definitions

In the scheme:

3.1. “The Act” means the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

3.2. Arts and culture includes<sup>1</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup> This definition is not considered exhaustive and is specific to this streamlined route, its objective, and the market failures it seeks to address.

- 3.2.1. Arts, Creativity and Culture (Category 1): traditional and contemporary disciplines including visual arts, music, theatre, dance, literature, linguistic culture and combined arts.
- 3.2.2. Screen (Category 2): film, TV, digital media and video sharing, extended reality (XR) and video games.
- 3.2.3. Cultural heritage (Category 3): museums, archives, historic sites (including buildings, gardens, landscapes, monuments and archaeological sites), libraries, collections and artefacts, and intangible heritage (living, traditional and folkloric heritage and linguistic culture).

including all sites, spaces and activities relevant to the development, creation, production, exhibition, distribution, maintenance, conservation and education of the above art forms, sectors and disciplines.

3.3. "Enterprise" has the meaning given by section 7 of the Act.

3.4. "Public authority" has the meaning given by section 6 of the Act.

#### **4. General conditions**

4.1. Before giving a subsidy to an enterprise under the scheme, a public authority must obtain the following information from the enterprise:

4.1.1. name and size of the enterprise

4.1.2. description of the proposed project or activity including but not limited to:

4.1.2.1. its location

4.1.2.2. start and end date

4.1.2.3. expected outcomes

4.1.2.4. anticipated costs of the project or activity before any deductions of tax or other charges, supported by relevant and contemporary documentation

4.2. A public authority may not give a subsidy for a project or activity that has started, unless:

4.2.1. it is of the view the project or activity would not be viable unless it starts before the subsidy is given, and

4.2.2. it has provided written authorisation to the enterprise that the project or activity can be started before the subsidy is given, or

4.2.3. it is of the view the scope of the project or activity is being widened, or the project or activity is being accelerated.

4.3. A public authority must give subsidies using objective and transparent selection criteria that are available to potential recipients in advance of giving the subsidy.

4.4. A public authority must not give any subsidy that would, save for section 30(1) of the Act, be prohibited or subject to the requirements in sections 15 to 29 of the Act.

4.5. A public authority may not give a subsidy under the Scheme that would, but for section 30(1) of the Act, be subject to any of the prohibitions and other requirements contained in sections 15 – 29 of the Act.

## **5. Eligible enterprise**

5.1. Subsidies may be given to any enterprise(s), including organisations which engage in economic and non-economic activity, which carries out an activity listed under Section 6 of the Scheme in the UK.

## **6. Eligible costs**

6.1. The streamlined route provides for the giving of subsidies that cover one or more of the following categories:

### **6.1.1. Revenue costs**

- Funding towards an identified viability gap to ensure continued and/or sustained levels and operations of cultural provision (For example, funding the development and delivery of a core, recurrent arts, cultural or creative programme or activity).
- Funding towards ancillary economic activity necessary to ongoing delivery of creative and cultural activity.
- Subsidising tickets to increase access.
- Funding towards ongoing overheads and wider business-related costs: staffing, digital, advertising/marketing, corporate services and estates management essential to achieving the Purpose.

### **6.1.2. Capital expenditure costs**

- Conservation, preservation and refurbishment of existing sites, spaces and venues including addressing conservation deficit.
- Conservation, preservation and purchase of assets such as culturally significant objects and collections.
- Improving access and facilities.
- Purchase of, and construction of, new buildings and premises.
- Asset purchase to improve quality of creative and cultural activity, including digital.
- Cultural Regeneration including but not limited to:

- improving economic and employment opportunities
- core infrastructure investment to address a lack of cultural and creative opportunities and existing infrastructure
- incentivising enterprises to expand activities to new areas, redistributing creative and cultural provision

### 6.1.3. **Project costs**

- Ringfenced, time-limited creative or cultural activity (including the development, delivery and/or creation of work, and festivals or events).
- Touring or distributing work locally, nationally, across the UK and/or internationally (including touring new work, utilising ready-made product on the shelf, maximising future commercial opportunities, and international exchange and cross-collaboration opportunities).
- Organisational development or business change projects.
- Digital skills and improvements.
- Research and Development (including cultural innovation and the development of culturally significant products, content or assets).
- Cultural Regeneration and Placemaking (including support new enterprises or incentivising existing enterprises to develop and deliver activities to new areas).

6.2. All eligible costs must be incurred directly as a result of the project or activity.

6.3. All eligible costs should be limited to those strictly necessary for the project or activity, and in respect of projects, limited to the funding agreement.

## **7. Form and calculation of the subsidy**

7.1. Subsidies under the Scheme may be given in the form of non-repayable grants, repayable grants and loans or a complex financial instrument that uses more than one of these forms.

### **7.2. Category 1 – Arts, Creativity and Culture**

7.2.1. The maximum amount of subsidy that can be awarded under this Category is:

- 7.2.1.1. £6 million for Revenue costs per 3 Financial Years
- 7.2.1.2. £15 million for Capital Expenditure costs per 3 Financial Years
- 7.2.1.3. £12 million for Project costs per 3 Financial Years

7.2.2. The maximum subsidy ratio under this category for Revenue costs will be up:

- 7.2.2.1. 80% of the eligible costs of a project for small and medium enterprises
- 7.2.2.2. 70% of the eligible costs of a project for large enterprises
- 7.2.3. The maximum subsidy ratio under this category for Capital Expenditure and Project costs will be up to 100% of eligible costs.

### **7.3. Category 2 – Screen**

- 7.3.1. The maximum amount of subsidy that can be awarded under this Category is:
  - 7.3.1.1. £6 million for Revenue costs per 3 Financial Years
  - 7.3.1.2. £15 million for Capital Expenditure costs per 3 Financial Years
  - 7.3.1.3. £12 million for Project costs per 3 Financial Years
- 7.3.2. The maximum subsidy ratio under this category for Revenue and Capital Expenditure costs will be up to:
  - 7.3.2.1. 70% of the eligible costs of a project for small and medium enterprises
  - 7.3.2.2. 50% of the eligible costs of a project for large enterprises
- 7.3.3. The maximum subsidy ratio under this category for Project costs where the total project budget is equal to or above than 5 million, will be up to:
  - 7.3.3.1. 70% of the eligible costs of a project for small and medium enterprises
  - 7.3.3.2. 50% of the eligible costs of a project for large enterprises
- 7.3.4. The maximum subsidy ratio for under this category for project costs where the total project budget is below 5 million, will be up to: 100% of eligible costs

### **7.4. Category 3 – Cultural Heritage**

- 7.4.1. The maximum amount of subsidy that can be awarded under this Category is:
  - 7.4.1.1. £6 million for Revenue costs per 3 Financial Years
  - 7.4.1.2. £15 million for Capital Expenditure costs per 3 Financial Years
  - 7.4.1.3. £12 million for Project costs per 3 Financial Years
- 7.4.2. The maximum subsidy ratio under this category for Revenue costs will be up to:
  - 7.4.2.1. 80% of the eligible costs of a project for small and medium enterprises
  - 7.4.2.2. 70% of the eligible costs of a project for large enterprises

7.4.3. The maximum subsidy ratio under this category for Capital Expenditure and Project costs will be up to 100% of eligible costs

7.5. The subsidy must be capped at either the maximum award amount or the limit indicated by the subsidy ratio, whichever is lower. There is no minimum amount of any subsidy that can be awarded. Public authorities do not need to give subsidies at those maximum levels and should always give the lowest subsidy amount for achieving their objective.

## **8. Transparency**

8.1. A public authority must meet the transparency requirements set out in Chapter 3 of Part 2 of the Act and upload any subsidy given under the Scheme to the subsidy database where required by the Act.

## **9. Cumulation**

9.1. When applying the subsidy ratios and maximum award amounts set out in the specific categories under the Schedule, a public authority must consider the cumulative amount of subsidies received by the enterprise for each particular project or activity, whether given under the Scheme or otherwise.

9.2. A subsidy given under the Scheme which falls below the subsidy ratios or maximum award amounts must not cause the subsidy ratios or maximum award amounts to be exceeded on a cumulative basis.

9.3. An existing subsidy must be cumulated with the proposed subsidy if the subsidy meets all of the following conditions and was given:

9.3.1. to the same enterprise by any public authority,

9.3.2. for the same project or activity as defined under the relevant categories of the Schedule,

9.3.3. for the same or substantially the same specific purposes as set out under the relevant categories of the Schedule, and

9.3.4. within the last 3 financial years (that is, the last 2 complete financial years, running from 1 April to 31 March, and the lapsed part of the current financial year).

9.4. A beneficiary can receive a subsidy under the different categories to deliver the same project.

9.5. Public Authorities should be careful to ensure that the subsidy ratios or maximum award amounts are not exceeded by dividing a single project into multiple projects with similar characteristics or objectives.

## **10. Performance criteria and monitoring**

- 10.1. Any subsidy awarded to an enterprise under the Scheme will be subject to the awarding public authority's relevant Terms and Conditions, as set out in the respective agreement between the awarding public authority and the beneficiary enterprise.
- 10.2. The subsidy will not be paid in full upon commencement of the funded activity and, dependent on the amount of the award, payments will be requested by the enterprise throughout the funded period.
- 10.3. In requesting a payment under the funding agreement, an enterprise will be required to demonstrate financial need, in line with its own investment processes. Subsidies will not be paid out in advance of need, so any payment amount must be justified in the relevant financial reporting submitted to the awarding public authority.

## **11. Misuse of subsidy**

- 11.1. A public authority should ensure that any subsidy given under the Scheme is given subject to a condition allowing the authority to recover the whole or part of the subsidy amount to the extent that the subsidy is used for a purpose other than the purpose for which it was given.

*Kate Dearden.*

Kate Dearden MP  
Minister for Employment Rights and Consumer Protection  
Department for Business and Trade  
Date: 06/01/2026

