

# Connections Through Culture Grants 2026

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Table of Contents

1. Key dates and application process.....	4
What is the deadline to apply?.....	4
How do I submit my application through Good Grants?.....	4
What information and supporting documents are required?.....	4
What should I do if I need technical support when completing the application form?.....	4
Can I request access provisions to complete my application?.....	5
2. Eligibility and who can apply.....	5
Who can apply?.....	5
Can individuals apply?.....	5
Can organisations apply?.....	5
Can festivals and biennials apply?.....	6
What do you mean by a UK-based partner or a partner based in an eligible participating country?.....	6
Can organisations registered outside the country where they operate apply?.....	6
Who should be the lead partner?.....	6
Can the same partners be involved in more than one application for this grants cycle?.....	7
Can previous British Council grantees apply?.....	7
Can we apply if we have worked together before?.....	8
Can we apply for activity that has already started?.....	8
What types of activity or costs are not eligible?.....	8
3. Eligible activities and types of projects.....	8
Can residencies be funded?.....	8
Can new commissions or research and development be funded?.....	8
Can showcasing be funded?.....	9
Do I have to apply with the country's listed thematic focus?.....	9
Can projects involving Creative technology be funded?.....	9
4. Visual Arts and Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft projects.....	10
How should Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft applicants frame their project?.....	10
I previously applied to the Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft Biennales and Festivals Grants Programme. How does CTC 2026 relate to that?.....	10

5. Partnership and collaboration.....	10
What do you mean by partnership and collaboration?.....	10
Do partners need to agree roles and responsibilities before the project starts? .....	11
Who should be the lead partner?.....	11
Who owns the intellectual property created through the project? .....	12
6. Grant amount and project budget.....	12
How much funding can I request? .....	12
Should budgets be submitted in local currency or pounds sterling? .....	13
What costs can be included in the project budget? .....	13
What is a contingency budget and what should it cover? .....	13
How should the grant funding be split between partners? .....	13
What happens if the budget is not split equally between partners? .....	14
Should access provision costs be included in the project budget? .....	14
What if I do not know the exact costs yet?.....	14
Can the project include other income, ticket sales or in-kind contributions?.....	14
How will grant payments be made? .....	15
7. Risk management, safeguarding and sensitive contexts.....	15
What should we consider if our project involves locations affected by conflict or at risk of conflict? .....	15
What should we consider if our project involves children, young people, adults at risk or other people who may be at increased risk? .....	15
8. Assessment and successful applications .....	16
What makes a strong application?.....	16
What are common reasons applications are unsuccessful? .....	16
How will applications be assessed?.....	16
Can we change the project after it has been approved?.....	16
When will applicants be notified of the outcome? .....	17
When can successful projects start? .....	17
When will the grant payment be made?.....	17
9. Use of content, AI and plagiarism.....	17
Can I use AI tools to help prepare my application?.....	17
What is the British Council’s position on plagiarism? .....	18
Who owns the intellectual property created through the project? .....	18
10. Further information .....	18
Where can I find the Applicant Guidance Toolkit?.....	18
www.britishcouncil.org	2

How can I contact the CTC team with a non-technical question? ..... 19

## 1. Key dates and application process

### What is the deadline to apply?

Applications open at 12:00 BST on 17 June 2026 and close at 23:59 BST on 12 August 2026. Applicants should allow enough time to complete the application and upload all required documents before the closing deadline.

### How do I submit my application through Good Grants?

Applications must be submitted in English through the Good Grants platform. Good Grants is the online platform used by the British Council to manage grant applications. To apply, you will need to create a free account through the CTC programme page on the platform using an email address and password. Please ensure that you complete and submit your application before the published deadline. Draft applications that have not been formally submitted through the platform will not be considered. Please note that the Lead Partner does not need to be the partner completing and submitting the CTC application form, provided this arrangement has been agreed by all project partners.

### What information and supporting documents are required?

Applicants will need to provide information explaining the proposed activity and why it is relevant to the partnership context. This should include information about each partner, the project timeline or schedule, the project budget including contingency, and the project risk-management approach. Where the project involves children, young people, adults at risk, public-facing activity or higher-risk contexts, applicants should explain how relevant safeguarding risks will be managed. Further safeguarding questions will be required for Ukraine projects. Supporting documents vary by applicant type, country and project activity. Applicants may be asked to provide a CV or biography if applying as an individual, or where artists, designers or practitioners are named; a Partnership Letter of Intent using the template provided; links, portfolios or examples of previous work where applicable; relevant permissions, licences or letters of support where applicable; and festival, biennial, venue or public presentation confirmation where applicable.

### What should I do if I need technical support when completing the application form?

If you need help navigating the Good Grants platform or experience a technical issue, please visit the Good Grants Help Centre. You can access the Help Centre through the table of contents on the right-hand side of your screen while logged into the platform or follow the Help Centre link provided. You can also submit a technical support request directly through the Help Centre. If you have forgotten your password, select Forgot Password on the login page and follow the instructions to reset it.

For non-technical queries, applicants should contact the British Council using the official enquiry form: [Enquiry Form: Connections Through Culture 2026](#). We aim to respond to enquiries within 3 to 4 working days on average.

### **Can I request access provisions to complete my application?**

Yes. If you require access provisions to complete your application, please contact the British Council through the Enquiry Form provided in Section 19.

When submitting your request, please include relevant details, such as the type of access provision required, any estimated costs, a brief explanation of what the provision is needed for, and how it will support you to complete your application.

We encourage applicants to contact us as early as possible and not to leave access provision requests until close to the application deadline. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and we aim to respond within 3 to 4 working days on average.

## **2. Eligibility and who can apply**

### **Who can apply?**

Applications must involve at least one UK-based partner and at least one partner based in an eligible participating country. Applicants may include artists, creative practitioners, cultural professionals, organisations, festivals, biennials, hubs, networks and collectives, subject to eligibility and local legal or tax requirements.

### **Can individuals apply?**

Individuals may be eligible where they meet local legal and tax requirements and can receive and manage grant funding. Some countries or payment processes may require applications to be led by an organisation. Applicants should check any relevant country-specific legal, tax or registration requirements before applying. Higher education students who are aged 18 or over may be eligible to apply as individuals. However, they are responsible for ensuring that they are permitted to undertake the proposed activity, including any restrictions on working hours, paid work, contracting, self-employment or receipt of grant funding. The proposed project plan and budget should be realistic and reflect what the applicant is permitted to deliver.

### **Can organisations apply?**

Yes. Organisations may apply where they meet the eligibility requirements and can demonstrate a meaningful partnership and collaboration between the UK and a participating country. Eligible organisations may include arts and cultural organisations, festivals, biennials, hubs, networks, collectives and organisations working across arts, culture and the creative sectors. Applications involving projects organised by, or taking place as part of, Visual Arts or Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft festivals, biennials or showcasing activity must be led by an organisation, festival or biennial, rather than by an individual artist, designer or practitioner.

## **Can festivals and biennials apply?**

Yes. Festivals and biennials may apply where they meet the eligibility requirements, and the proposal demonstrates meaningful collaboration between the UK and a participating country. This could include working with an artist at the festival or biennial. Festival or biennial activity should clearly show the role of each partner, the public engagement context and the wider collaborative benefit. Festivals which take place less regularly, for example triennials, may also apply.

## **What do you mean by a UK-based partner or a partner based in an eligible participating country?**

A UK-based partner means an individual or organisation that is legally based in one of the four nations of the United Kingdom: England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, at the time of application and throughout the project delivery period. The British Council welcomes applications involving partners from across all four UK nations, including applicants and organisations based outside London.

A partner based in an eligible participating country means an individual or organisation that is legally based in one of the eligible participating countries at the time of application and throughout the project delivery period. Eligibility is based on where the applicant or partner is legally based and able to receive and manage grant funding, not on nationality or citizenship. The Lead Partner must ensure they are appropriately registered, including for tax purposes where required, and compliant with all applicable laws and regulations in the country where they are based and where funded activity is carried out. Country-specific legal, tax or registration requirements may apply, and applicants may be asked to provide further information during our due diligence and onboarding stage.

## **Can organisations registered outside the country where they operate apply?**

No. Each core partner must be legally based in the country they are applying from at the time of application and throughout the project delivery period. Applicants must ensure that they are appropriately registered, including for tax purposes where required, and compliant with all applicable local laws and regulations in the country where they are based and where funded activity will take place. Projects may include additional partners from non-participating countries or locations where they add value to the proposed activity. However, the application must still include at least one UK-based partner and at least one partner legally based in an eligible participating country. Costs relating to additional partners based in non-participating countries or locations cannot be covered by the grant.

## **Who should be the lead partner?**

We recommend that the Lead Partner is the partner based in the country where the largest share of the project activity will take place. For example, if a UK partner and an Argentina-based partner are collaborating, and the main project activity is taking place in Argentina, the Argentina-based partner should usually be the Lead Partner. As a guide, where a significant proportion of

delivery is taking place in one country, the partner based in that country would normally be expected to act as the Lead Partner. Applications involving projects organised by, or taking place as part of, Visual Arts or Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft festivals, biennials or showcasing activity must be led by an organisation, festival or biennial, rather than by an individual artist, designer or practitioner. The Lead Partner will be responsible for managing the grant agreement, receiving and managing the grant funding, coordinating reporting, and ensuring that all partners meet the programme requirements. However, having a Lead Partner does not mean that the project should be led or shaped by one partner only. CTC expects all partners to work together in a collaborative, respectful and mutually beneficial way, with clear roles, shared decision-making and fair recognition of each partner's contribution. Partners should agree the Lead Partner role and responsibilities, ways of working, budget arrangements and decision-making process before submitting the application. This should be confirmed through the required **Partnership Letter of Intent**, using the template provided, which must be submitted as part of the supporting documents. Please note that the Lead Partner does not need to be the partner completing and submitting the CTC application form, provided this arrangement has been agreed by all project partners.

As part of due diligence and contracting, the Lead Partner will be required to provide banking details and any supporting legal, tax or registration documentation requested by the British Council to receive and manage grant funding. Please note that the British Council cannot make payments to sanctioned individuals, organisations or financial institutions.

### **Can the same partners be involved in more than one application for this grants cycle?**

A UK partner or a partner based in an eligible participating country may be involved in more than one application, provided each application is for a clearly distinct project. However, the British Council will only award one grant per partnership. Applicants should not submit multiple similar applications with the same or different partners in the hope of increasing their chances of success. We strongly encourage applicants to focus on developing the strongest possible application with the most suitable partner. Quality, relevance, collaboration and feasibility matter more than the number of applications submitted. Each application should clearly explain why the partnership is appropriate, what each partner will contribute, and how the project will create meaningful cultural collaboration and mutual benefit.

### **Can previous British Council grantees apply?**

Applicants who have previously received British Council funding may be eligible if the proposal is for a new project, new phase, new partnership or significantly developed activity. Applicants cannot request CTC funding for activity or costs that have already been funded by the British Council or another funder. Projects may receive co-funding from other sources, provided there is no duplication of funding for the same activity or cost lines.

### **Can we apply if we have worked together before?**

Yes. Existing partnerships can apply, but the application should clearly show what is new or additional about the proposed project.

### **Can we apply for activity that has already started?**

No. CTC cannot fund activity that has already taken place or costs incurred before the grant agreement has been signed. Applicants must not make financial commitments, start grant-funded activity or incur grant-funded costs until they have received formal confirmation of the award and completed the required contracting process.

### **What types of activity or costs are not eligible?**

CTC cannot support projects that do not meet the programme eligibility requirements, including projects without an eligible UK-based partner and an eligible participating-country partner, projects that are not primarily focused on arts, culture or the creative sectors, or projects that do not demonstrate meaningful collaboration. The grant cannot be used to support activity that has already taken place, costs incurred before the grant agreement has been signed, or activity and cost lines that have already been funded by the British Council or another funder. Co-funding from other sources is permitted, provided there is no duplication of funding for the same activity or costs.

Core staff salaries, normal contracted staff time, general operating costs and organisational overheads that are not directly attributable to the delivery of the proposed project are not eligible. However, additional staff costs directly related to delivering the project, such as overtime or work undertaken beyond normal contracted hours specifically for the project, may be included where these costs are reasonable, proportionate and clearly evidenced. Applications must remain within the relevant country grant limit and eligible delivery period.

## **3. Eligible activities and types of projects**

### **Can residencies be funded?**

Yes. Residencies may be eligible where collaboration, exchange and shared learning are central to the proposal.

### **Can new commissions or research and development be funded?**

Yes, new commissions and research and development may be eligible where they are part of a meaningful collaborative project and meet the programme criteria. Applicants should explain the collaborative process, partner roles, intended outcomes and how the activity supports long-term cultural connection. For projects centred on showcase participation, applicants should explain whether the proposal relates to existing work, new development, or a longer-form collaboration, and should frame the project against the most relevant CTC criteria.

## **Can showcasing be funded?**

Yes. Showcasing, exhibitions, presentations, festivals and biennials are eligible where they form part of a collaborative project. This includes activity that may previously have been supported through separate British Council Arts opportunities, including Visual Arts Biennials Connect and the Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft Biennales and Festivals Grants Programme.

For Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft practitioners, international showcase participation, including biennials, design weeks, fashion platforms, architecture festivals and craft festivals, can be the primary activity of a CTC-funded project, not just a secondary element. Applications should clearly describe the collaborative process between the UK partner and the partner based in an eligible participating country within the showcase context. This may include how the work is developed, curated, presented, interpreted, contextualised or shared with audiences.

Practitioners or organisations working on longer-form collaborations where showcase participation is not the primary activity are also welcome to apply through CTC, provided the project demonstrates meaningful partnership and collaboration between the UK partner and the partner based in an eligible participating country.

Where applicants indicate that their project involves Visual Arts or Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft festival, biennial or showcasing activity, the application form will include additional questions to capture the specific information needed for assessment. Applications involving projects organised by, or taking place as part of, Visual Arts or Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft festivals, biennials or showcasing activity must be led by an organisation, festival or biennial, rather than by an individual artist, designer or practitioner.

## **Do I have to apply with the country's listed thematic focus?**

No. Connections Through Culture is open to a wide range of topics, themes, art forms and creative sectors. Where a participating country has listed a thematic focus, such as climate change or sustainability, this means that the country is particularly encouraging applications that respond to that theme. It does not mean that applications outside that theme are automatically ineligible. All eligible applications will be assessed against the published assessment criteria. Applicants should focus on developing a strong, relevant and clearly collaborative project that meets the programme aims and eligibility requirements.

## **Can projects involving Creative technology be funded?**

Yes. Projects involving Creative technology may be eligible where they demonstrate meaningful collaboration between a UK-based partner and a partner based in an eligible participating country. This may include digital arts, XR or immersive experiences, games, and other projects that combine art, culture and technology in new or experimental ways. Applicants should clearly explain the creative concept, the role of each partner, how the technology supports the proposed activity, and the intended outcomes for audiences, participants or the wider sector.

## **4. Visual Arts and Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft projects**

### **How should Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft applicants frame their project?**

Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft applicants should apply through Connections Through Culture 2026 and frame their proposal according to the main focus of their project. Projects centred on showcase participation, such as biennials, design weeks, fashion platforms, craft festivals or architecture event programmes, are eligible within CTC. In these cases, the showcase may be the central context for the collaboration. Practitioners working in Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft who are developing longer-form collaborations, residencies, research and development, or co-creation projects where showcase participation is not the primary activity should also apply through CTC but should frame their proposal against the broader collaboration criteria.

### **I previously applied to the Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft Biennales and Festivals Grants Programme. How does CTC 2026 relate to that?**

The Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft Biennales and Festivals Grants Programme supported UK-based practitioners in Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft to participate in international showcasing events in collaboration with international partners.

That offer is now part of CTC 2026. You do not need to apply anywhere else.

If your project centres on biennial, design festival, fashion platform, architecture festival or craft showcase participation, CTC 2026 is the right route. Your application should explain how the showcase context supports meaningful collaboration between the UK partner and the partner based in an eligible participating country.

Practitioners or organisations working on longer-form collaborations where showcase participation is not the primary activity are also welcome to apply through CTC, provided the project demonstrates meaningful partnership and collaboration between the UK partner and the partner based in an eligible participating country.

Applicants who are unsure how to frame their application should contact the British Council through the enquiry form.

## **5. Partnership and collaboration**

### **What do you mean by partnership and collaboration?**

Collaboration is central to Connections Through Culture. Applications should show that the project has been jointly developed, with all partners clearly reflected in the project idea, delivery plan, budget and intended benefits. Applicants should explain who the partners are, why the partnership makes sense, whether the partners have worked together before, what each partner will contribute, how decisions will be made, how partners will communicate, how the project will

support cross-cultural exchange, and how the partnership could develop beyond the grant period. For Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft projects centred on showcase participation, collaboration may take place through the showcase context itself. This could include how the UK partner and the partner based in an eligible participating country work together to produce, curate, present, interpret, contextualise or share the work with audiences through a biennial, design week, fashion platform, architecture festival or craft showcase. In these cases, the showcase can be the central context for the collaboration, provided the application clearly demonstrates shared purpose, mutual benefit and the role of each partner. Before the project starts, applicants should agree clear roles and responsibilities with all project partners. This should include delivery, budget management, payments to artists or suppliers, reporting, communications, safeguarding, access provision, intellectual property, decision-making and conflict resolution. Applicants should clearly explain the role of any additional partners and how they will be involved. We strongly recommend that all partners, including additional partners, agree clear roles, responsibilities and ways of working before the project starts. This could be set out in an inter-partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding.

### **Do partners need to agree roles and responsibilities before the project starts?**

Yes. Applicants should agree clear roles and responsibilities with all project partners before the project starts. This should include who is responsible for project delivery, budget management, payments to artists or suppliers, reporting, communications, safeguarding, access provision, intellectual property, decision-making and conflict resolution. Applicants should clearly explain the role of any additional partners and how they will be involved. We strongly recommend that all partners, including additional partners, agree clear roles, responsibilities and ways of working before the project starts. This could be set out in an inter-partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding.

### **Who should be the lead partner?**

We recommend that the Lead Partner is the partner based in the country where the largest share of the project activity will take place. For example, if a UK partner and an Argentina-based partner are collaborating, and the main project activity is taking place in Argentina, the Argentina-based partner should usually be the Lead Partner. As a guide, where a significant proportion of delivery is taking place in one country, the partner based in that country would normally be expected to act as the Lead Partner. Applications involving projects organised by, or taking place as part of, Visual Arts or Architecture, Design, Fashion and Craft festivals, biennials or showcasing activity must be led by an organisation, festival or biennial, rather than by an individual artist, designer or practitioner. The Lead Partner will be responsible for managing the grant agreement, receiving and managing the grant funding, coordinating reporting, and ensuring that all partners meet the programme requirements. However, having a Lead Partner does not mean that the project should be led or shaped by one partner only. CTC expects all partners to work together in a collaborative, respectful and mutually beneficial way, with clear roles, shared

decision-making and fair recognition of each partner's contribution. Partners should agree the Lead Partner role and responsibilities, ways of working, budget arrangements and decision-making process before submitting the application. This should be confirmed through the required **Partnership Letter of Intent**, using the template provided, which must be submitted as part of the supporting documents. Please note that the Lead Partner does not need to be the partner completing and submitting the CTC application form, provided this arrangement has been agreed by all project partners.

As part of due diligence and contracting, the Lead Partner will be required to provide banking details and any supporting legal, tax or registration documentation requested by the British Council to receive and manage grant funding. Please note that the British Council cannot make payments to sanctioned individuals, organisations or financial institutions.

### **Who owns the intellectual property created through the project?**

Applicants and project partners are responsible for agreeing ownership and use of any intellectual property created, developed or shared through the project. This should be discussed and agreed between partners before the application is submitted. Copyright to original content is automatically owned by the creator. Where a project involves co-creation, partners should agree in writing how any jointly developed ideas, proposals, artworks, designs, research, written materials, documentation or other creative outputs may be used, credited, adapted or shared during and after the project. Partners should not substantially reproduce, adapt or use materials created or shared by another partner without their permission. This includes written proposals, project concepts, artistic materials, images, designs, recordings, research, community knowledge or other creative content. The British Council does not normally own the intellectual property created through funded projects. However, as part of the grant agreement, successful applicants will be required to grant the British Council permission to use project information, images, recordings or materials for non-commercial reporting, evaluation, communications and promotional purposes. Applicants should ensure they have the appropriate permissions, licences and rights to use any third-party material included in the project. The British Council cannot provide legal advice on intellectual property matters, and applicants should seek independent advice where needed.

## **6. Grant amount and project budget**

### **How much funding can I request?**

The maximum grant amount is awarded per project or partnership, not per partner. The grant must cover the full partnership activity, including costs for both the UK partner and the partner based in an eligible participating country. Grant limits vary between participating countries and are listed in **Section 4 of the Applicant Guidance Toolkit**.

## **Should budgets be submitted in local currency or pounds sterling?**

Budgets must be submitted in pounds sterling, GBP. This helps ensure that applications can be assessed consistently and fairly across participating countries.

## **What costs can be included in the project budget?**

Applicants should include only costs that are directly related to the delivery of the proposed project. Eligible costs may include professional fees for contracted artists, facilitators, designers, specialists or other contributors involved in delivering the project; necessary travel and accommodation; reasonable equipment and materials costs; venue hire and production costs; marketing and promotional activity directly related to the project; project-specific access costs for audiences, participants, venues, events, communications or public-facing activity; and translation or interpretation costs where these are needed to support delivery.

Core staff salaries, normal contracted staff time and general overheads that are not directly and proportionately attributable to the delivery of the project are not eligible. However, additional staff costs directly related to project delivery, such as overtime or work undertaken beyond normal contracted hours specifically for the project, may be included where these costs are reasonable, proportionate and clearly evidenced. Applicants must also not include costs incurred before the grant agreement has been signed or costs that have already been funded by the British Council or another funder. All requested costs should be clearly explained and itemised in the project budget.

## **What is a contingency budget and what should it cover?**

A contingency budget is a small proportion of the overall project budget set aside as a safety net for unforeseen costs. This is particularly important for international projects, where unexpected changes may affect delivery costs. A contingency budget may be used to respond to unforeseen additional costs associated with protecting artists, participants or partners who may be at risk; visa requirements; natural disasters, conflict or political instability; inflation or significant changes in local costs; unexpected increases in travel, accommodation or shipping costs; or exchange-rate fluctuations. Partners should discuss contingency planning together and ensure that the project budget is realistic, proportionate and carefully considered. The amount requested, together with any additional income secured, should be sufficient to cover the anticipated costs of delivering the project.

## **How should the grant funding be split between partners?**

We recommend that the grant funding is split as equally as possible between the UK partner and the partner based in the participating country. As a guide, applicants should aim for a 50/50 split where this is appropriate and realistic. Where the budget is not split equally, applicants should clearly explain the rationale and show that the proposed split is fair, proportionate and appropriate to the project delivery context.

### **What happens if the budget is not split equally between partners?**

Applicants should explain why the proposed split is appropriate and how it still supports fair and mutual collaboration. The assessment will consider whether the budget reflects genuine collaboration, mutual benefit and clear roles for both partners.

### **Should access provision costs be included in the project budget?**

Yes. Costs for access provisions relating to audiences, participants, venues, events, communications or other public-facing activity should be included in the main project budget. Applicants may also request additional personal access provision costs, on top of the main project budget, where these are needed by members of the core delivery team to manage and deliver the project. Applicants should provide relevant details about the access provisions required and the associated costs. Please note that requests for personal access provision costs are not guaranteed, although we will aim to support identified access requirements where possible. Childcare costs are not currently eligible.

### **What if I do not know the exact costs yet?**

We understand that some costs may not be confirmed when you submit your application. However, your budget should include realistic estimates and appropriate contingency planning for unforeseen expenses. Where exact figures are not yet available, applicants should use recent market rates, historical costs or indicative quotes from suppliers as a guide. For costs that may fluctuate, such as international travel, accommodation or shipping, applicants should use realistic rounded estimates. Applicants may also include a reasonable contingency budget where appropriate. This should be proportionate to the size and nature of the project and clearly linked to potential delivery risks, such as exchange-rate fluctuations, inflation, increased travel costs, shipping delays, changes in venue costs, natural disasters, conflict or political instability. Any staffing costs directly related to delivering the project should be included as separate budget lines and clearly explained. This may include project-specific staff costs such as overtime or work undertaken beyond normal contracted hours. Core staff salaries, normal contracted staff time, general operating costs and organisational overheads that are not directly attributable to the proposed project are not eligible.

### **Can the project include other income, ticket sales or in-kind contributions?**

Yes. Your project may benefit from additional income alongside the amount requested from CTC. This may include funding from other sources, ticket sales, partner contributions or in-kind support, such as donated venue space, equipment, professional time or services. Applicants should include any confirmed or pending additional income in the relevant section of the application form and reflect this accurately in the overall project budget. In-kind support should also be clearly described and assigned a realistic estimated value where possible. Projects may receive co-funding from other sources, provided there is no duplication of funding for the same activity or cost lines. Applicants should clearly explain how the CTC grant and any additional income will contribute to the delivery of the project.

## **How will grant payments be made?**

Provisionally selected applicants will be required to complete due diligence and contracting requirements before any funding can be released. The Lead Partner will be required to provide banking details and supporting documentation as part of this process. Please note that the British Council cannot make payments to sanctioned individuals, organisations or financial institutions. Additional sanctions, compliance and banking checks may be required before a grant agreement can be finalised.

## **7. Risk management, safeguarding and sensitive contexts**

### **What should we consider if our project involves locations affected by conflict or at risk of conflict?**

Some participating countries in this CTC round may currently be affected by conflict, political instability or changing security conditions. In some cases, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel advice may advise against travel to certain parts of a country. Applicants must check the latest FCDO travel advice when preparing their application and continue to monitor it throughout project delivery. CTC cannot support travel that goes against FCDO travel advice. If your project involves locations affected by conflict or at risk of conflict, your application should clearly explain how the relevant risks have been considered and how they will be managed. This should be addressed in the feasibility, delivery, budget, and risk-management section of the application form and reflected in your project plan. As FCDO travel advice may change between the submission of an application and project delivery, applicants should also explain how the project could adapt if circumstances change. This may include postponing or cancelling travel, changing locations, revising the timeline, or moving activity to online or hybrid formats where appropriate. Projects involving partners or activity based in Ukraine will need to provide additional information with the application.

### **What should we consider if our project involves children, young people, adults at risk or other people who may be at increased risk?**

If your project involves children or young people under the age of 18, adults at risk, or other individuals who may be at increased risk of harm, your application should explain how you will ensure their safety, well-being and protection throughout the project. Some individuals may face increased risks when participating in certain activities, particularly in sensitive social, cultural or political contexts. This may include artists, partners, participants or audience members from marginalised communities or groups who may be at greater risk of discrimination, harassment, exclusion or harm. You should consider whether your project team has the relevant experience and expertise to manage these risks appropriately. Where needed, you should seek specialist advice or support and include any associated costs in your project budget. Your project plan and risk-management approach should also explain how you will address sensitive themes, respond to changes in circumstances and protect the people involved in your activities.

If your application is successful, you may be asked to provide further information about your safeguarding arrangements and complete relevant documentation confirming your responsibilities. For further reading, please see the [British Council Safeguarding Global Policy Statement](#).

## 8. Assessment and successful applications

### What makes a strong application?

Strong applications usually:

- Clearly explain the creative idea and why it matters.
- Show why the partnership is relevant, meaningful and mutually beneficial.
- Include access provision costs, translation, travel, marketing, project management, production, fabrication and material costs, shipping, installation, de-installation and contingency where relevant, and where proportionate to the proposed activity.
- Explain what each partner will contribute.
- Demonstrate collaboration, rather than only promotion or presentation.
- Provide a realistic timeline and budget.
- Identify audiences, participants or sector groups clearly.
- Explain what impact the project aims to achieve and how success will be measured.
- Show how equality, diversity, inclusion, access provision, environmental sustainability and social value have been considered.
- Demonstrate that risks have been identified and can be managed.

The strongest applications are usually those where the creative idea, partnership, delivery plan, budget and intended impact are clearly connected.

### What are common reasons applications are unsuccessful?

Common reasons include unclear partnership roles, weak evidence of collaboration, insufficient project detail, unrealistic timelines or budgets, missing supporting documents, activity outside the eligible delivery period, or proposals that focus mainly on promotion rather than meaningful collaboration.

### How will applications be assessed?

Eligible applications will be assessed against five criteria: quality and artistic or creative merit; partnership and collaboration; feasibility and project management; audience or participant engagement and impact; and equality, diversity, inclusion, environmental sustainability and social value.

### Can we change the project after it has been approved?

Any significant change to the project, including changes to partners, timeline, budget, location, activity or outputs, must be approved in writing by the British Council before the change is made.

Approval is not automatic or guaranteed, and each request will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

### **When will applicants be notified of the outcome?**

Provisional selection outcomes are expected to be communicated from 14 October 2026 onward. Applicants should note that this timeline is indicative and may be subject to change depending on the number of applications received, assessment timelines, due diligence requirements, contracting and any country-specific requirements. A provisional outcome does not mean that funding has been formally confirmed. Successful applicants will still need to complete the required due diligence checks, provide any requested documentation and sign a grant agreement before funding can be released.

### **When can successful projects start?**

The eligible project delivery period runs from December 2026 to December 2027. Successful applicants must not begin grant-funded activity, incur grant-funded costs or make financial commitments based on an expected award before the grant agreement has been signed. Applicants should ensure that their proposed timeline is realistic and allows sufficient flexibility for due diligence, contracting and onboarding to be completed before activity begins.

### **When will the grant payment be made?**

The first grant instalment, representing 80% of the award, is expected to be processed during December 2026 and conclude by January 2027. Payment will be subject to the successful completion of due diligence checks, receipt of all required documentation and signature of the grant agreement. The final 20% instalment will be paid following submission and approval of the final report, in line with the payment terms set out in the grant agreement.

## **9. Use of content, AI and plagiarism**

### **Can I use AI tools to help prepare my application?**

Applicants may use AI tools to support the preparation of their application, for example to help structure ideas, improve clarity or check spelling and grammar. However, the application must accurately reflect the applicant's own project, partnership, budget, experience and intentions. Applicants remain fully responsible for the content submitted. Any information provided must be accurate, original where required, and agreed by all project partners. AI-generated content should not be used to create misleading, generic or inaccurate answers, or to present experience, partnerships, activity or evidence that is not real.

Where content is created or heavily supported by AI, this should be clearly acknowledged at the beginning of the relevant section or document with the line: **“Generated with the assistance of AI”**. Applications that contain false, misleading, copied or unsubstantiated information may be deemed ineligible or withdrawn from consideration.

## **What is the British Council's position on plagiarism?**

Applicants must ensure that all information, ideas, text, images, project concepts, artistic materials and supporting documents submitted as part of their application are their own, or that they have permission to use them.

Plagiarism means presenting someone else's work, ideas, words or materials as your own without proper permission or acknowledgement. This includes copying or closely reproducing another person's written proposal, project concept, artistic work, research, images, designs, recordings or other creative content.

Where applications are developed collaboratively, all partners should agree what information and materials can be included in the application and how they should be credited or used.

Applications containing plagiarised, copied, misleading or unauthorised material may be deemed ineligible, withdrawn from assessment, or, if discovered later, may lead to the withdrawal of funding or termination of the grant agreement.

## **Who owns the intellectual property created through the project?**

Applicants and project partners are responsible for agreeing ownership and use of any intellectual property created, developed or shared through the project. This should be discussed and agreed between partners before the application is submitted. Copyright to original content is automatically owned by the creator. Where a project involves co-creation, partners should agree in writing how any jointly developed ideas, proposals, artworks, designs, research, written materials, documentation or other creative outputs may be used, credited, adapted or shared during and after the project. Partners should not substantially reproduce, adapt or use materials created or shared by another partner without their permission. This includes written proposals, project concepts, artistic materials, images, designs, recordings, research, community knowledge or other creative content. The British Council does not normally own the intellectual property created through funded projects. However, as part of the grant agreement, successful applicants will be required to grant the British Council permission to use project information, images, recordings or materials for non-commercial reporting, evaluation, communications and promotional purposes. Applicants should ensure they have the appropriate permissions, licences and rights to use any third-party material included in the project. The British Council cannot provide legal advice on intellectual property matters, and applicants should seek independent advice where needed.

## **10. Further information**

### **Where can I find the Applicant Guidance Toolkit?**

The Applicant Guidance Toolkit is available on the [Connections Through Culture Grants](#) page on the British Council Arts website. Applicants should read the Toolkit carefully before starting their application. It includes information about eligibility, participating countries, available funding,

eligible activity, assessment criteria, budgets, access provision, safeguarding, supporting documents, key dates and the application process.

### **How can I contact the CTC team with a non-technical question?**

For non-technical questions about eligibility, access provision or the application process, please contact the British Council using the official enquiry form: [Enquiry Form: Connections Through Culture 2026](#). We aim to respond to enquiries within 3 to 4 working days on average. Applicants are encouraged to submit questions as early as possible and not to wait until close to the application deadline.