

Cultural Action Area (CAA) Grants Programme

How we make decisions

Applicants are advised to read the application form guidance and attend/watch a recorded webinar or on-line workshop (dates tba). [More information is on the CAA Call webpage](#) on the Birmingham City Council website.

All applications received by the closing date will go through the following stages.

We will use the information you give us in your application form, any attachments and any other information we hold about you to help us decide which applications to fund. By 'any other information we hold about you' we mean, for example, how you've managed other grants from us.

Stage 1 – Eligibility

We will check that each application is eligible and complete.
All applications that pass this stage will be assessed.

Stage 2 – Assessment

We will use the evidence in your application and our expertise and judgement to score the five questions within **Section 2: Describing Your Project** of your application.

Questions 1 & 2 will have a weighted score, so the answers to these will be more highly represented in the scoring than for Questions 3,4 and 5.

We will score your application using the following scale:

- **Strongly Met** – the application meets the programme criteria with strong qualities.
- **Met** – the application meets the programme criteria.
- **Potential** – the application shows the potential to meet the programme criteria.
- **Not Met** – the application does not meet the programme criteria.

A moderation session will ensure agreement on the overall score for each application.

Applicants with an overall score of 'strongly met', 'met' or 'potential' will be shortlisted. If your application scores 'not met', we will not recommend it for a grant.

If your application is shortlisted, we will check how realistic and achievable your management plans and budget are. As part of this check we will:

- Explore whether any applicants who lack experience or capacity to run a project like this can be supported in some way to ensure they remain on the shortlist

All shortlisted projects that are realistic and achievable or can be supported to be realistic and achievable will be considered to be potentially fundable and will go forward to Stage 3, balancing factors.

Stage 3: Balancing Factors

A panel of at least 4 people with the relevant expertise around cultural actions zones/areas, cultural activity, business improvement districts, placemaking neighbourhoods and economic development will review the shortlisted applications against a set of **balancing factors**, these will ensure that at least one award representing each of these factors is considered for funding:

- Geographical spread / Represents an area which has had previously limited cultural investment or activity
- Builds on previous activity - such as a Cultural Action Zone GBSLEP pilot
- Represents an innovative or unique combination of organisations that will be piloting a new approach
- Has a good level of additional funding and/or resources (match) to go alongside their CAA application

This stage will result in the recommendation of up to five projects for grant funding per round.

Stage 4: Approval

The above recommendations will be scrutinised by the Authorising Senior Manager with potential 'critical friend' input from the Programme Steering Group, which includes key cultural, neighbourhood and enterprise zone experts.

Awards are then finally approved, and the funding decision is communicated to the **Programme Funder (Enterprise Zone Programme Board)** for information.

If we decide not to fund your application, we will write to you to let you know. We will explain our decision and outline your next steps.

The panel will also consider whether any applicant that failed this time should re-submit, where for example, adjustments to their proposal could make for a much stronger application next time. If this happens the applicant will be informed of this potential and how they might respond.