

Cultural Action Area (CAA) Programme

Grant Funding – Round 3

Applicant Information and Guidance

Birmingham City Council's (BCC) Cultural Development Service is delighted to announce Round 3 of seed funding to support the establishment of Cultural Action Areas (CAAs).

Investing in Culture plays a major role in driving place-based economic recovery by re-animating local centres with a diversified cultural and heritage offer. Even small investments can make a big difference.

When talking about Culture we are referring to Arts (such as drama, literature, music, theatre, visual arts), Combined Arts (such as outdoor arts, carnival arts and festivals), Film, TV, Radio, Museum Activities and Heritage.

Information, Advice and Guidance

Please read this guidance document whilst completing the grant application form as it provides important information about the programme and information to clarify the application form questions.

Our friendly team will be offering individual advice sessions, networking events and presentations to groups to give applicants the best possible chance of success.

Please email art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk if you would like to speak to a member of our team about this funding.

Access Support

We want to make sure everyone can apply for our funding.

If you need any of this information in a different format or language or have any questions, please email art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk We will be happy to help you.

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Key Information

The Cultural Action Area programme 2023 – 2029 is being run by Birmingham City Council’s Cultural Development Team and funded through its Enterprise Zone.

The programme will seed fund a wide range of initiatives and activities that will establish Cultural Action Areas for longer-term economic and social benefit.

Through initial seed funding investment the CAA programme seeks to galvanise and empower groups of local stakeholders (individuals, companies, organisations and groups) to utilise the power of Culture to re-animate high streets and local centres.

Cultural Action Areas must be driven by the *impact* Culture can have for your locality ensuring that opportunities and resources are maximised for the benefit of everybody.

At the end of the 12-month grant period the Cultural Action Area will be established with a forward plan for realising a clear shared vision enabling lasting change for the locality.

Total Funding

Round Three will award a total of £290K to up to five projects (£225,000 for capital expenditure and £65,000 for revenue expenditure).

Eligible applicants can apply for between £20,000 and £100,000 seed funding for a 12-month period of capital and revenue expenditure.

Consortiums can request just capital funding support, just revenue funding support or a mixture of both. Whatever the combination the maximum revenue funding you can apply for is £30,000 and the maximum capital funding you can apply for is £100,000.

The Cultural Action Area programme is majority capital funding we expect to see this reflected in your application.

Application Deadline

The deadline for submissions is 13:00 on Friday 07 March 2025. Applications submitted after this time will not be considered.

We will confirm receipt of your emailed application within two working days. If you don't receive a receipt, you must email art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk as soon as possible.

Awards will be announced in late April 2025. The 12-month period of capital and revenue expenditure to establish your Cultural Action Area will begin in May 2025.

Aims and Outcomes

Led by strong local collaborations the Cultural Action Area programme will support the development and delivery of sustainable activities, approaches and ways of working that will enable lasting change for high streets and local centres.

Cultural Action Areas have five broad aims. An element of each must be included in your application.

1. Empower a consortium of local stakeholders and leadership around a long-term shared vision so they can develop sustainable activities, improve community cohesion, reshape the identity of their place and develop a legacy plan.
2. Re-animate local places with a new and diverse mix of cultural, experiential, community activities and neighbourhood improvements to drive footfall and improve community and visitor experience and strengthen the economy of the area.
3. Strengthen the reputation of our local places because of improvements in facilities, cultural offer, community activities and safety alongside an overall increase in pride for the local area.
4. Provide opportunities for citizens to participate, volunteer, develop their skills and improve their wellbeing and future life chances.

5. Improve the sustainability, impact and revenue generating capacity of local businesses, community, cultural and other organisations or groups.

The programme aims will be achieved by seed funding acting as a catalyst bringing local stakeholders and leaders together to:

- Find new ways of developing and establishing a local cultural offer to re-animate their locality
- Identify and invest in existing activities, strengths, funded programmes and other resources to make the most of what already exists
- Develop new partnerships, collaborations, and ways of working that will enable change so that cultural activities and initiatives can be sustained long term
- Work together to pool existing resources and funding
- Apply for future funding, explore opportunities for earned income and develop new business plans

Consortiums must ensure that environmental responsibility, equality and diversity are considered within the application.

Eligibility

Locations

This programme can only support Cultural Action Areas in locations with a Birmingham City Council postcode.

We will only support one Cultural Action Area per locality.

Through rounds 1 and 2 we have invested seed funding in establishing Cultural Action Areas in the following locations:

Bournville
Brandwood
Druids Heath
Handsworth/Soho
Highgate
Jewellery Quarter
Kings Heath
Northfield
Old Yardley
Weoley Castle

If you are interested in becoming a partner on one of these Cultural Action Areas email art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk and we will connect you with the consortium of local stakeholders and leaders.

Who can apply?

A lead applicant must apply on behalf of a partnership of local stakeholders and leaders (consortium) to carry out activities to establish or develop a Cultural Action Area.

The consortium must include a minimum of three organisations. If the application is successful, the lead applicant will be accountable for the grant on behalf of the consortium.

The lead applicant must be a not-for-profit organisation registered and based in Birmingham with a Birmingham postcode.

The lead applicant applying on behalf of the consortium can be a:

- Registered charity
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- or Company limited by guarantee

The lead applicant must have a:

- bank account in its own name and be able to receive the grant
- management committee or board with at least three unrelated members to provide independent oversight and support
- governing document confirming that the organisation is not-for-profit

The programme grant funding cannot support

- Activities and initiatives that take place outside of the Birmingham City Council area
- Expenditure outside of the grant period
- Activities or services that have already taken place or will take place before we can make a decision on your application
- Fundraising, donations and prizes
- Political or religious activities
- Closed events such as school trips

Match funding

Your application must include some match funding demonstrating that consortium members are work together to pool existing resources, assets and funding.

A wide range of complimentary programmes or funding streams can be used as match, along with assets, spaces and selective donations of time and expertise.

Match Funding can include:

- Ticket sales and other earned income over the grant period
- Funding from public organisations such as local authorities
- Cash donations from individuals or companies

- Grants from National lottery distributors, trusts and foundations
- Donations of equipment or materials subject to suitable valuations
- Public appeals and fundraising events
- Non-cash contribution of goods or services that you would otherwise have to pay for
- Donations of time and expertise

How To Apply

If you're interested in leading an application to establish a Cultural Action Area or becoming a partner on a consortium, please sign up to our Register of Interest by emailing art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk with 'CAA Registration' in the subject field.

We will send you the Round 3 application form along with information about networking events, presentations and individual advice session. We will also connect you with other stakeholders expressing an interest in establishing a Cultural Action Area in your locality

If you have any questions about the Cultural Action Area programme, please email art.grants@birmingham.gov.uk