

As a result of our Money Talks survey in late 2017, we identified that there were a [range of issues at play](#) when it comes to artists and finances. Some are more systemic (eg the relationship between [artists and venues](#)) and others are knowledge or skills based. In an attempt to help with the latter, Theatre Bristol has commissioned these new help sheets (Dec 2018), written by Emily Williams and Carrie Rhys-Davies, on four hot topics:



- ways to calculate how much your work costs
- understanding financial deals
- understanding fundraising options
- building a case for support

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Understanding Fundraising Options

A helpsheet for artists by Carrie Rhys-Davies

It's completely understandable to feel a bit overwhelmed by fundraising options. It can sometimes feel like the choices that we make around how to raise the funds we need carry a lot weight, because, well, what if they don't work out? The purpose of this Help-Sheet is to help you get into the strongest possible position from which to start navigating those fundraising options, so that you can make choices you feel good about and your efforts have the best chance of succeeding.

Whilst this Help-Sheet does not focus on helping you to develop a fundraising strategy*, thinking about how your fundraising activity ties into your organisational strategy (or, if you like, your vision as an independent artist) is really important. If what you do in the way of fundraising is integrated with the way you think about and carry out your artistic work (rather than approached separately on a "when needs must" basis), then it's not only likely to be more rewarding in its own right, but it'll also be far more likely to result in meaningful and sustainable relationships with investors (aka funders, donors, supporters, etc.). It's hopefully reassuring to remind yourself that there is ([give or take a bit of data protection law and the like](#)) no 'right' way to fundraise; there's only the way that's right for you and your work. You might also find it helpful to keep in mind that you are the only expert on your work – no-one else knows it like you do - which puts you in a really strong place to fundraise for it.

This Help-Sheet is in three sections and aims to mobilise into the service of fundraising all the stuff that makes you that expert, plus to furnish you with some Solid Information about the options available, based on my own experiences as a producer and of working closely with fundraisers, as well as drawing on lots of the wisdom out there (see links throughout). The first section suggests some things to think about *before* you start looking at fundraising options, so that you're best placed to assess their relevance to your circumstances; then section two lists main fundraising options; and section three is designed to help you use your time wisely when researching them, so that you can pull together all the information you need to decide what might be the most manageable and effective ways for you to bring in the funds.

* If you want to find out about how to develop a fundraising strategy, then take a look at the excellent [Fundraising for First-timers](#) guide by Emma Goad and watch [this training video](#) by Wendy Smithers.

SECTION 1: Getting Fundraising-Ready

Here are some questions to think about *before* you start trying to work out where the money is. Some of them are pretty obvious, but having good, solid answers to them all will put you in a super-strong place for researching fundraising options. Time spent at this stage is really well invested.

What sort of organisational structure do you have?

Whether your legal status is as sole-trader, a company limited by guarantee, a charity, a community interest company, or some other model, it will determine what fundraising options are available to you, and, as you embark on your fundraising journey you might want to keep an eye on whether the structure you have is working best for you. For instance, it's worth bearing in mind that a large number of Trusts & Foundations won't make grants to non-charities. You can find more info about different business structures [here](#).

What do you need the money for?

If you've not done so already, now's the time to build your Case for Support - your one-stop-shop of information about your funding needs. Being totally across why you deserve funding is fundamental to informing your research and deciding what fundraising options are best for you. Check out one of Theatre Bristol's other helpsheets, Building Your Case for Support, for more on this.

What resources do you have to put into your fundraising activity?

Who's actually going to be *doing* the fundraising, and what does that represent in terms of time and money? Is it just going to be you? You and your collaborators? Or maybe you're thinking about bringing in some support? Consider the difference in amount and type of resources required for the following: writing an application for £5000, setting up and maintaining a friend scheme, making a film for a crowdfunding campaign, writing an application for £50k, planning and delivering a fundraiser event. An abbreviation often used in the context of fundraising is ROI. ROI stands for Return On Investment, which basically means how much effort (resources) are you putting in for how much back. Your fundraising activity has got to fit with how you work and be worth your while, so think about what's the best use of the resources at your disposal. (To work out your ROI, divide the amount raised by the amount invested and multiply it by 100 to get a percentage. Anything over 0% and you're in profit - the higher the % the higher the ROI.)

Have you ever fundraised before?

Not a trick question! This doesn't just mean, "Have you applied for a big pot of money before?" There may be other times when you've brought in financial support for your work – anything from selling cakes after a performance to that surprise £1000 from the local business your aunt works for... If you have, think about how it went - what worked, what didn't, and is there any little spark there that could potentially be rekindled to support your current and ongoing funding needs?

What are your fundraising assets?

A fundraising asset is anything you can use in the service of your fundraising. Artworks and artists are particularly fine assets and you should think about how you and yours might best be harnessed. An obvious example might be offering an exclusive post-show event with lead artists for a group of potential investors. A less obvious example: I used to work at a venue that happened to share a building with a very swanky penthouse flat, which the theatre's fundraiser managed to persuade the owner to let her use for entertaining donors and hosting special events. What do you have access to that might help you with your fundraising? Another way to think about assets is in relation to your USP – your Unique Selling Point. What is it that's *distinctive* about you that could help you with your fundraising? And you might also find it helpful to do a bit of analysis of your current supporter base, as your best advocates will be those who are already behind you. Who supports you and why? How can

you capture and share that? And what might the characteristics of your current supporter base suggest to you about possible other avenues of support and funding?

What's your financial target?

How much money do you need to raise? It's a no-brainer that before you start identifying potential funding streams, you need to be super clear on your budget and how it is made up. If it breaks down into usefully discrete chunks (and perhaps also into different types of expenditure, e.g. capital or revenue, engagement or professional development), then you might want to consider seeking different parts of it from different sources. This spreads the risk and broadens your support base, though bear in mind it might also require investment of more resources. You should also be clear on what other cash you do already have, or are anticipating having, as most potential funders will want to know about these and about who else is backing you financially.

When do you need the money?

This is really important. It's not that the task of making an approach to a potential donor or planning other fundraising activity will in itself necessarily take a long time (although developing relationships is of course time-consuming); rather, waiting to hear whether or not you've been successful can take the good part of a year, if not longer. So, you need to be as clear as you can be on your timeframe. As with all project planning, a good way to approach it can be to work backwards: work out when you need the money by (remembering to build in sufficient time to move from getting the decision to starting delivery) and count back the maximum amount of time it'll take to hear back. There you've got your latest possible submission deadline. Funders too will be looking to see that you've done this sort of reality-check planning and are a reliable investment. And you should also think about what happens if you don't get the money - are you giving yourself enough time to re-scope and implement Plan B...? It's only sensible to have a think about what happens if your number one option doesn't work out, and some funders will specifically ask for details of this, so make sure you've thought it through.

SECTION 2: Fundraising Options

Working out where the money is for what you want to do

Something very achievable that you can start doing straight up is building your awareness of what artists /projects similar to you/yours are doing in terms of fundraising activity and have been successful in applying for. Handily, most funders and sponsors will require their name and/or logos to be on any publicly available info about artists/companies/work they've supported, so develop a habit of looking out for these on websites and posters and in brochures and programmes. And artists too tend to like to shout loudly their appreciation for people who've coughed up for their crowdfunding campaign or special event – so click through to the campaign, follow the signs and see what you can learn. You might also find it helpful to keep a bit of an eye on the fundraising landscape, not least so that you're aware of any new funding streams or schemes that come online. A really easy and light-touch way of doing this is to follow some key organisations on twitter – I'd recommend Arts Council England (@ace_national), Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy (@artsfundraising) and Arts Professional (@artspro) for starters.

About the list below

The list of fundraising options below is not comprehensive. It's a starting point that's been developed specifically with you (independent artists and small companies/organisations in Bristol) in mind and, if you've gone through the first section of this Help-Sheet and are fundraising-ready, you'll hopefully be well-equipped to identify what looks like it might be a good fit. Working on this, I've been struck by the recurrence of words and phrases like "competitive", "hard work" and "time-consuming"... My hope is that, rather than engender despondency, this simply serves to emphasise the importance of the

sustainability of your fundraising activity and of building resilience – two more reasons why thinking about fundraising as an integrated part of your overall strategy is important. There's no doubt that the climate is pretty tough, but there is money out there and people who want to give it to you.

- **Arts Council England (ACE)**

It's kind of amazing that there is (still) open access, public funding available through the [Arts Council](#), and it's the obvious first port of call for most artists/companies seeking funding for their work. This year the old Grants for Arts programme was replaced by [National Lottery Project Grants](#), which requires projects to have reached a certain level of development in order to be considered, whilst the new [Developing Your Creative Practice](#) strand (which has been designed with independent practitioners much more in mind) has made applying for R&D and professional development activity much more straightforward. Both pots are competitive, obviously, but the ACE website is copiously resourced with very helpful guidance notes and case studies, and the opportunity to speak to an Arts Officer prior to making an application is one well worth taking up. ACE's online application portal Grantium is notoriously user-unfriendly, but meanwhile there's an increasing number of hacks out there helping make using it a little less painful (like this [Project Grant template by Laura Sweeney](#)).

Find out more: Read this Theatre Bristol [Report](#) about applying for ACE funding, and for a full list of ACE funding take look at ACE's [funding finder](#).

- **Other National Lottery distributors**

Depending on what you're doing and whom you're working with (and especially if your work has some sort of a community focus), applying for [other National Lottery funding](#) (e.g. Awards for All, The Big Lottery Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund) might be an option. Very usefully, there's [a quick quiz](#) you can take to find out which funds you might be eligible to apply for.

- **Local authority funding**

Despite [headline-grabbing slashes to their funding of arts and culture](#), local authorities are still a major investor in the arts in England, and in Bristol we're lucky to comparatively well off in this respect, despite cuts of almost a quarter announced last year. Bristol City Council (BCC) has since reworked how it distributes its funds, launching its [Cultural Investment Programme, 2018 – 2022](#), which has three different funding streams designed to fulfil its strategic priorities. Download the prospectus for detailed information about what each stream supports, its various deadlines etc. Do also note that it's possible that some other council departments such as tourism, education and planning might have funding available to support the arts, so if the programme itself doesn't seem accessible to you then that doesn't mean local authority support is ruled out.

Find out more: [Bristol City Council Arts & Culture Funding](#)

- **European & international funding**

Whilst at the time of writing there is still [a lot of uncertainty](#) about how Brexit is going to impact the sector, including EU funding, if you're looking to collaborate with international artists, go on residencies abroad or tour worldwide, then exploring cross-border funding programmes is still a no-brainer, as there are generous pots of money out there.

Find out more: [Creative Europe](#) is the EU's programme to support the cultural, creative and audio-visual sectors and its [Culture sub-programme](#) funds mainly collaborative projects and initiatives across all art forms. [IETM's Fund-finder \(2017 edition\)](#) contains loads of useful information about European funding beyond Creative Europe, and [Euclid](#) has summary of all EU funding programmes relevant to the arts, culture, heritage and creative industries. If you're new to the idea of working internationally,

then check out [Farnham Malting's Caravan programme](#) for training opportunities. Finally, find out how to work with the British Council [here](#).

- **Trusts & Foundations (T&Fs) and other grant-giving organisations**

Name a worthy cause and there'll be at least one Trust and/or Foundation out there flying its flag. The legally bound purpose of T&Fs is to invest in making the world a better place, and they do this in a myriad of ways, the sorts of funds available and application processes often as different as the T&Fs themselves. With all, though, eligibility is usually a particularly important consideration – for example, many will often only fund registered charities and few will fund individuals. If you think T&Fs might be an appropriate option for you, then research is all, and the final section of this Help-Sheet will hopefully be especially useful.

Find out more: Unfortunately, there is not a magic free website out there where you can search for T&Fs that might be interested in funding you. The [Directory of Social Change](#) is a really useful source of support and info, but accessing its [trustfunding.org.uk](#) database will set you back a whopping £350 p/a. You could consider clubbing together with some fellow artists to get straight on in there, or you could come at it sideways. For instance, [GrantNav](#) enables you to search for recipients of grants, showing who's received how much from where – great for identifying potential matches for your own work - and [Grants Online](#) has a really useful newsfeed of information about newly available pots of money. Other helpful things out there are:

[This list of sources of funding](#) for theatres, productions and actors compiled by 20 Bedford Way; [Funding Central](#), which is free to subscribe to for small organisations and lists funding available for the community and voluntary sectors (although not for individuals) and also has lots of helpful advice about applying for grants;

Arts Fundraiser Emma Goad's guide [Fundraising for First-timers](#), which contains a really helpful section on T&Fs, as does [this article by Joanna Ridout](#).

And these are some of the big arts funders: [Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation](#); [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#); [Jerwood Charitable Foundation](#); [Paul Hamlyn Foundation](#); [PRS Foundation](#); [Wellcome Trust](#); [Foyle Foundation](#); [Garfield Weston Foundation](#); [John Ellerman Foundation](#); [Quartet Community Foundation](#); [Clare Duffield Foundation](#)

Top tip: if you're looking to apply for T&F funding, but you're not a charity, if you're partnering with an organisation that IS, then it might be worth a conversation with them to see if an application might be made in their name.

- **Crowdfunding**

Crowdfunding involves raising money from a large number of people who each contribute a relatively small amount, usually via an online platform. Some crowdfunding platforms allow you to keep all money donated; others only allow you to keep it all when your target is met. Sometimes rewards or benefits play a large part in crowdfunding campaigns; sometimes these are negligible. Broadly speaking, crowdfunding tends to work best for artists and companies who are already very visible online on social media and have an associated broad supporter base. It also tends to work best for artists whose work naturally lends itself to being effectively represented in the most typical crowdfunding format – short films. Amounts raised tend not to be huge, so crowdfunding often works best as part of a bigger campaign alongside other fundraising activities. Crowdfunding is also notoriously hard work, and you'll know from the number of links you receive from people whose work you follow that competition for your hard-earned buck can be steep. So if you're seriously thinking about this option, do your research: which crowdfunding campaigns have you supported and why?

Search through the platforms and see who's doing what and how well it seems to be working. There are loads of platforms out there; amongst the most popular are [Crowdfunder](#), [Kickstarter](#) and [Indiegogo](#).

Find out more: The [UK Crowdfunding Association](#) has lots of guidance, news and information about crowdfunding. Blast Theory's [Guide to Crowdfunding](#) is a really worthwhile read and there are copious other toolkits online if you feel this is the best route for you. You might also find [Nesta's research into matched crowdfunding](#) an interesting read, alongside [this short Arts Professional article](#) on that research.

- **Business & Corporate Sponsorship**

Larger companies often have some budget to support the arts as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) – a kind of business model that enables them to integrate impact on and responsibility towards society through ethical policies or practices that support and benefit individuals, the local community and the environment. How imaginatively a CSR budget is deployed can vary enormously from one company to the next, and getting in there and establishing relationships with large national or international companies can take a long time and not necessarily be worth the effort, as amounts invested, at least to begin with, are often small. Key to an approach is being super clear on why you feel a particular company might be a good match for you and a willingness to listen hard for what's motivating them. Most often, they'll be looking at what's in it for them in terms of the profile of their brand/products/services (for instance, reaching new audiences) or benefits to their employees (e.g. discounted tickets to events). It might be easier to get in there and have a conversation with the person who holds the purse strings of smaller, more local, independent businesses, but the climate is hard at the moment and, again, amounts tend to be small. With business and corporate support, contacts tend to be key, and sometimes the best way in can be through existing connections, so it might be worth thinking about Who You Know. The important thing is to be realistic about the amount of time and leg-work building these relationships can take. It's a real practice of cultivation, and more often pays off if you're in it for the long-haul.

Find out more: Although rather old, [this report by Arts & Business](#) is still a very relevant and useful guide to CSR and working with businesses and corporates (the link to download is on the right of the page). If you're looking at the possibility of sponsorship, then you might also want to be alive to associated ethical considerations. [Take the Money and Run](#) offers some helpful food for thought.

- **Individual giving, friends and membership schemes**

Whether you're looking for one-off, ad hoc, or regular donations, with individual giving it's important to understand what's motivating your friends to support you. Whilst it's perfectly possible to run an effective friends scheme with very light-touch benefits, the amount of work involved keeping friends with your friends and really nurturing those relationships should not be underestimated - especially if you want this area of your fundraising activity to build, moving from small amounts to more substantial donations. Again, friend schemes often work best alongside other fundraising activity and as part of your overall organisational strategy. It's increasingly common to see [Just Giving](#) (or similar) buttons on arts organisation websites, and these can be effective ways of encouraging spontaneous, small-scale gifts.

Find out more: This case study of [an award-winning individual giving campaign](#) is worth a look for the variety of different options pursued.

OTHER

Just because this is “fundraising” – don’t switch off your artist brain! It is as vital a resource to you in fundraising as it is in making your work: it is on your side and will help you think imaginatively, flexibly and open-mindedly about what’s possible. Below are some questions and provocations to help you flex your fundraising thinking:

- How can you earn the most income from your artistic activity? How might fundraising activity meaningfully segue with your artistic activity and be practiced with the same ethos?
- How do you go about making relationships in your work? How might you translate across some of that into how you approach funding relationships?
- Who are you working with and what is their capacity to pull in funding? Whether it’s presenting partners, artistic collaborators, a school, a hospital, a charity or a local authority – they will all have their own ways of drawing in money. Working on a fundraising campaign in close collaboration with your partners can be a great way of strengthening that relationship and mutual ownership over the work.
- How do you want to feel when you’re carrying out your fundraising activity?
- A thought experiment: imagine that you could GUARANTEE that your fundraising activity will be successful, and that you’re carrying it out for the pure pleasure of the undertaking. What would you do?
- A thought experiment: imagine that the individual or organisation that you feel would be LEAST likely to want to fund you is the last option available. What would you do?
- A thought experiment: imagine that a potential funder doesn’t ACTUALLY have any money to give you, but you REALLY want them in your life and part of your work’s story. What would you do?

Find out more: [Innovations in Fundraising](#) is a rather inspiring report that draws together the experiences and learning of a number of small charities who are punching way above their weight when it comes to designing imaginative ways to draw in the funds.

SECTION 3: Effective Researching

Organised research that gets you the info you need to make informed choices is time more than well spent. Whilst the questions below are perhaps most relevant if you’re looking to do the sort of fundraising activity that involves “applying for grants”, there are things here that you can tailor to help you scope out other sorts of fundraising activity you might be planning, e.g. crowdfunding, an individual giving campaign, or an event. As you can see, they bear out the importance of getting fundraising-ready beforehand...

• Are you eligible for the funding available?

First and foremost, get this one ticked off. Funders put stipulations and parameters on virtually anything it’s possible to categorise or sub-categorise, from how old you are and where you’re based or tour to, to your ethnicity or gender, from whom you work with and the artform you practice to whether you’re a charity. Make sure you read all the guidelines so you’re 100% clear - and also because some sources of funding may have more than one way in, so just because one avenue might not be available to you, it doesn’t mean the whole funder is off limits.

• Why does the funder/supporter give their money?

Identifying what your shared values are is a crucial part of working out whether a potential funder might be a good match. If you’ve already developed your Case for Support, this should be easy-peasy. Finding out what makes a potential donor tick is a vital part of the research process.

- **What's required for the application (OR... What's required to set up and deliver your crowdfunding campaign or fundraiser event, for example)?**

Compare this with what resources you have available to you and the assets you might you be able to mobilise. (See Getting Fundraising-Ready.)

- **What are the timings for the application process (OR... How long will it take you to set up and deliver your campaign or event)?**

When is the deadline for applications or approaches, when will you find out the decision, and how does this fit in with when you need the money by? Some funders have rolling programmes, which means you can apply any time of the year; others may have just one deadline a year. Some funders may take up to four months to make a decision; others might let you know in less than a month. You might also want to bear in mind what the funder's policy on future grant-making is. For example, some T&Fs won't accept applications from the same individual/organisation within a certain amount of time awarding a grant.

- **How much do they give?**

How does the amount of funding / size of grants available match with what you need? Again, some funders may have different schemes that offer different amounts of funding, and different sorts of application processes for different amounts. It's highly unusual for any funder to cover the whole cost of a project, and it might be that they will only fund up to a certain percentage of a project's whole budget, e.g. 50%. So where's the rest of your money coming from? Also, do remember to be realistic about what you ask for. If a funder awards grants of between £5k and £40k, it's unlikely that many are going to be awarded at that upper end, so let that inform your ask. This is especially true if you don't already have a relationship with the funder, and if you don't have much funding from elsewhere. You can always approach them for a larger amount next time!

- **What's required in the way of ongoing relationship management and reporting?**

Receiving the cheque in the post isn't the end of your relationship with your funder. How much and what sort of managing of the relationship is required post-investment? What are their reporting requirements, and do you have the monitoring and evaluation processes in place to be able to provide them with the information they're going to want? Make sure you're going to have the capacity to deliver what's required and that it can become integrated into your way of working, as this is an essential part of it being a meaningful mutually beneficial relationship that will hopefully have legs well beyond your current application.

You might find it helpful to fill in a table like this when you're doing your research, so that you can quickly and easily build a picture of your options:

NAME OF POTENTIAL FUNDER	E.G. The Swottlesham Family Trust	Potential funding source #2, etc.
CONTACT DETAILS	info@swottlesham.org.uk ; 02345 678910	
Am I eligible?	Yes – charitable status, based in Gloucestershire	
What are our shared values?	Creating music-based opportunities for hard-to-engage young people in Glos.	
What's the deadline for applications?	3 a year - end of March, end of July, end of Nov	
When do I hear?	2 months after deadline	
How much do they give?	£500 - £5000; no more than 50% of whole budget	
What's required for the application?	Online form up to 3000 words, plus budget, plus annual accounts, plus letter confirming commitment from partner deliverer	
What's required for follow-up/reporting?	Report after 6 months and another at end of project (max. 3 pages) with final budget and annual accounts; list of all media coverage	
What do I want to find out from them before applying?		

GOOD LUCK!

Where to find out more:

- The ACE-funded [Arts Fundraising and Philanthropy Programme](#) is dedicated to upskilling the sector and has a wealth of really valuable information available through its [Ideas & Knowledge](#) section. Particularly useful is [Culture Hive](#), where you can search by key words for articles, reports, case studies, guidelines and more on virtually any aspect of fundraising. Highly recommended.
- The [Institute of Fundraising](#) (IoF) is the professional membership body for UK fundraising, and its website has lots of useful resources, including important information on compliance.
- If you're a charity, then there's essential reading on lawful and responsible fundraising [here](#).
- Emma Goad's [Fundraising for First-timers](#) is a clear and accessible guide to strategic fundraising for small arts organisations, with lots of info that's also helpful for individuals.