



London Borough of Lewisham

Consultation on Lewisham Council future support for arts and culture

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This document is supplementary to and should therefore be read alongside the wider *Consultation on priorities for, and approach to, the main grants programme* [Lewisham Council - Consultation on our Main Grants Programme 2022-2025](#)

Proposals for significant changes to the Main Grants Programme are currently being considered, including a reduction of approximately one third to the overall budget - £800,000 in total. For a number of years, funding to arts organisations has been included in the Main Grants budget, primarily through the Widening Access to Arts and Sports theme but also through Communities That Care. However, in the context of Lewisham's Borough of Culture year, the time seems right to separate the funding out and consider how it might be used within a wider package of support for arts and culture that also makes best use of other resources available and responds to the current and emerging needs of the sector.

Culture is important to Lewisham. It has helped shape the borough that we now know, supports the health and wellbeing of our residents, brings communities together and provides employment for many. The benefits of Council investment over a period of many years are apparent and we want this to continue. The case for continued investment is further highlighted by the way that art and culture has suffered so badly during the Covid pandemic, with an estimated 152,000 jobs at risk within London's culture and creative industries together with its supply chain [Creative Industries Supply Chain COVID-19 Impact | London City Hall](#). A report from the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee warned that the pandemic presented "the biggest threat to the UK's cultural infrastructure, institutions and workforce in a generation" [Impact of Covid-19 on DCMS sectors \(parliament.uk\)](#).

These proposals are in line with the Council's overall approach to recovery and follow the themes of [Lewisham Council - Future Lewisham: Our borough's recovery](#). These are:

- A greener future
- A healthy and well future
- An economically sound future
- A future we all have a part in

Lewisham's Borough of Culture year comes at an opportune moment, providing a much needed boost to the sector and a means of supporting recovery from the Covid pandemic. As well as providing funding for the core budget, it will also put Lewisham in the spotlight with other funders, providing the opportunity for organisations to benefit directly. Outcomes for the year must focus on future legacy, ensuring that the sector continues to thrive beyond 2022. These proposals are framed with this in mind and designed to best meet the needs of arts and culture in Lewisham for the next phase.

Current Main Grants funding to arts organisations totals £551,205 and it will be necessary to identify ways to reduce this by one third in line with the cuts to the overall main grants programme, leaving a budget of £390,000. We want to position these funds alongside other resources to ensure maximum benefit and therefore propose a three pronged approach:

1 1. A Future we all have a part in: support for cultural infrastructure

This proposal mirrors the wider Main Grants approach, which is to focus on supporting the sector as a whole through strong infrastructure, coordination and fundraising services rather

than trying to directly fund everything that is needed in the borough. In the context of scarce public resources it is essential that we seek to future-proof the local arts and culture sector by cultivating a climate of self-sufficiency, where leadership comes from within. Our proposal is that this should be done through investment in a cultural anchor organisation.

An anchor organisation would be expected to:

- Provide sector leadership
- Co-ordinate consortium funding bids
- Support emerging artists
- Nurture partnerships

Funding allocation: 1 grant of up to £150,000 (3 year funding)

2. A future we all have a part in: support for a strong and diverse sector

A. Core funding

Lewisham is a borough is rich in cultural opportunities and yet many of our residents still experience significant barriers. The [Taking Part Survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) indicates that age, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic and employment status all play a part in excluding people from participating cultural activities. While this continues to be the case, it is important that we support organisations to work with communities that find themselves at a disadvantage. This funding will particularly focus on work around

- Ethnic diversity
- Disability
- Economic disadvantage
- Age (young people and older people)

Funding allocation: 8 grants of up to £30,000 each (3 year funding)

B. Small grants

We recognise the value of providing one off funding to organisations in order for them to develop new projects. In Lewisham we have benefitted hugely from the creative and innovative approaches taken by arts and culture based organisation to addressing some of the most challenging issues and this funding will help us to continue to invest.

Lewisham Council has recently entered into a new contract with The Film Office to manage film locations in the borough - this contract will provide an income which will be used to provide a budget for small grants.

Themes may vary over time but will include:

- Increasing participation
- Addressing the climate emergency
- Celebrating diversity
- Promoting equality and fairness of opportunity

Funding allocation: variable according to annual income (one off funding). These grants will start in 2023 and will follow on from a series of one off funding opportunities available as part of Borough of Culture 2022.

3. An economically sound future: developing the cultural workforce

There continues to be a lack of diversity across the cultural workforce and we want to develop a more proactive way of addressing this issue. The GLA Culture Strategy [Culture for all Londoners](#) identifies that 95 per cent of jobs in London's creative economy are held by people from advantaged socio-economic groups, only 23.4 per cent of jobs in London's creative economy are held by people from BAME groups and that in the creative and cultural workforce in England, only 12 per cent of workers classify themselves as disabled.

This programmes of work will include:

A. Bursary funding for emerging artists

Small bursaries will be made available to artists in the early stages of their career to help them develop projects that work alongside some of the Council's civic events eg Black History Month, International Women's Day, LGBT+ Month. Alongside the bursaries other support and mentoring will be available around issues such as fundraising and project development. This approach has been piloted this year and we will be looking to review and build on it.

B. Broadway Theatre associate artists

The Broadway Theatre is currently being refurbished and will reopen in 2022 ready to claim its place as a venue fit for the challenges of the 21st Century. A refreshed vision will see a multi-purpose approach that includes an associate artist's programme based around the studio theatre.

C. Employment and training programmes

We will continue to support employment and training activities which support greater diversity in the cultural and creative sectors. This includes a [new £500,000 two-year programme](#) from July 2021 to June 2023, funded by the Council and the European Social Fund (ESF), which will broker work placement and employment opportunities for 125 residents in the creative sector; also the [Stride London programme](#) which is supporting a range of employment and training projects in Lewisham, Southwark, Lambeth and Wandsworth to address inequalities in the creative industries.

4. Cultural and creative enterprise and growth

Cultural and creative businesses already play an important part in the wider prosperity of Lewisham and will increasingly do so in the future. Working with colleagues in the Council's Economic Development team we will provide a better joined up approach to business advice, support and training. This will build on the existing Creative Enterprise Zone in Deptford/New Cross, using the networks and learning from this programme to also benefit other areas of the borough. We will seek to ensure there is a good supply of suitable and affordable workspace for cultural and creative organisations, plus targeted advice and support to ensure organisations can start-up and grow in Lewisham.