

ARTS COUNCIL NATIONAL LOTTERY PROJECT GRANTS

# Audience development and marketing

Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants is our open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects.

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This information sheet relates to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants. See [our website](#) for more information about Project Grants.

In this sheet, we will talk about the following.

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## Audience development and marketing

We ask for an 'audience development and marketing plan' to support all applications for more than £100,000. You may find it useful to write one while planning your project, even if you apply for less than this.

If you apply for more than £15,000, you can attach an audience development and marketing plan to your application, if you want to.

In this sheet we explain how to write an audience development plan and highlight some points to think about when planning how to promote your project.

### What is audience development?

'Audiences' can include visitors, readers, listeners, viewers, participants, learners, users of a product, and people who buy works of art and publications.

'Audience development' is activity to help develop relationships with new and existing audiences. It can include aspects of marketing, commissioning, programming, involvement in decision making, education, customer care, and distribution.

### What is marketing?

Marketing describes the different methods you can use to show the value of your work to potential audiences. Marketing can involve a combination of different things, such as:

- **advertising** – in programmes and magazines, on the radio or television, as posters or flyers, on social media and so on
- **media coverage** – for example, reviews of your work or interviews in local and national press, or on television, radio or websites, to raise the profile of your project
- **appropriate pricing** – think about how much your audience can afford and will be willing to pay, as well as how much you need to successfully manage your project

- **outreach work** – working with partners to reach communities you might not usually reach.
- **distribution networks** – for example, if you have written a book or recorded an album, this could be the reach of your publisher or record label
- **using market research** – gathering information about audiences to help you focus your plan and reach as many people as possible. This could be through surveys, focus groups or even using academic research as a guide

You can carry out this work yourself or, for larger projects, use the services of a professional consultant or organisation, such as a public relations (PR) company.

## Why are audience development and marketing important?

By using audience development and marketing, you can improve how you serve existing audiences and find new ones. This can increase your income as well as find new opportunities and partnerships.

A good plan will help you to:

- understand your audience's needs and preferences
- focus on who you want to reach and how you will reach them
- build deeper relationships with existing audiences, encouraging them to try new experiences or helping them to get more out of their experiences
- reach out to new audiences, particularly people or communities you may not currently be reaching
- where appropriate, involve the public in decision making about, for example, the issues they want to tackle through arts and culture, and the opportunities they want to see locally. You may also be helping people to create their own arts and cultural opportunities
- help the public to make informed choices about the kinds of arts and cultural activities they want to attend, visit or take part in
- identify how much it will cost to put your plans into action

## Writing your plan

There are no set rules about what you should include in your plan, and it does not have to be long or complicated. What you include will depend on the scale of your plans and how much they will cost.

Before writing your plan, ask yourself the following questions. (They might not all be relevant to your project.)

- do you have an audience already and, if so, who are they?
- have you asked your existing audience for their views? If so, what do they think of your work and what did you find out?
- do you have new activities you want to do? If so, who do you want to reach with these new activities and who could the audience be?
- how is the best way to communicate with your target audience?
- what kinds of information might your audience need (before, during or after their experience)?
- what are the real selling points or benefits you have to offer?
- what is the right price to charge?
- what is the best location and environment?
- what are your audience objectives? This might include attendances, income from tickets, secondary sales (such as merchandise), or particular audiences (for example, new audiences from a specific area or community). Do you have tactics in place to meet your objectives?
- how do you find out what's important to local communities or people you hope to reach with your project?
- how will your plan build on your previous successes?
- are there other people or organisations you could learn from (for example, those who have experience of doing similar things or reaching similar audiences)?
- how will you evaluate your plan and get feedback?
- what are your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?

You can use any answers to these questions in **sections of your plan**.

## Structuring your plan

We recommend using the headings below as a starting point for your plan. Be as specific as you can, use as much evidence as possible, and link back to your organisation's mission, where appropriate.

### **Background information on you and your current activities**

Briefly describe what you currently do, and explain why you need to do the audience development and marketing activity that you are asking us to fund.

### **Your (audience) objectives**

Clearly set out the objectives of and targets for your audience development or marketing activities. Make them SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timely

For example, increase the number of 55- to 65-year-olds attending jazz performances by 5% before October next year. Look for evidence that your objectives are realistic.

### **The details of your project**

Tell us about the target audience or participants for your project. Be as specific as possible (for example, students aged 18 to 24). Provide details of how many people you are hoping to involve (be specific and break this down by each target audience). Describe the benefits of your project and why it would appeal to them. Describe what is unique or different about your project and plans.

### **Demand for your project**

Tell us how you know that there is demand for your project, and provide details of any research you have carried out.

## **Audience development and marketing methods**

Describe the ways you plan to use to reach your target audience and explain why you have chosen them.

## **Timetable**

Provide details of the timetable for your activities. Give exact dates if possible.

## **Budget**

Show the income and expenditure for your audience development and marketing activities, and remember to include the costs of evaluating your plans. Where possible, break down the figures to show the detail of the budget. For example, if you employ a freelance marketing advisor for four days' work and they charge £250 a day, you would show this as: Four days @ £250 per day = £1,000.

## **Evaluation**

Describe how you will measure the success of your plan. For example, how you will find out if you have reached the people you wanted to reach. Describe when and how you will do this and who will be involved. Use your findings to guide future work.

## **Further information**

[Culture Hive](#) is an online web resource for marketing and audience development.

[Audience Finder](#) provides lots of useful information about potential audiences.

[Audience Spectrum](#) can tell you more about the cultural behaviour, profile and opinions of different groups in England.

## Audience development and marketing agencies

The following agencies offer audience insight and development advice at a local, regional and national level. They are committed to working closely with other arts organisations, particularly on planning for audience development.

[The Audience Agency](#) can help you to understand and discover your audiences

[&Co](#) is a marketing company committed to the cultural sector. They can help people get to know and understand audiences better, through research and market analysis, planning and evaluation.

[Thrive \(formerly Audiences NI\)](#) helps cultural organisations unlock their potential through better understanding their audiences. Access free resources, reports, and insights for understanding and growing your cultural audiences.

[CultureRepublic \(in Scotland\)](#)

[Arts Marketing Association](#)

The professional development body for those promoting the arts and cultural industries

[The Chartered Institute of Marketing](#) is the professional development body for those working in the marketing industry

[Econsultancy](#) provide a wide range of research, data, analysis, training, consulting, events and online resources to enable organisations and individuals to succeed online.



## Other useful contacts

[Voluntary Arts Network](#) aims to promote participation in the arts and crafts across the UK and the Republic of Ireland, and increasingly in Europe.

[The Museums Association](#) is a professional membership organisation for museum, gallery and heritage professionals, museums, galleries and heritage organisations in the UK. They can provide recommended rates of pay as well as advice and news about the museums sector.

[Public libraries](#) are at the heart of many communities, meeting the needs of people of all ages and from walks of life. They are well placed to work with artists and arts and culture organisations in reaching new people and places.

[The Reading Agency](#) - there are a number of reading agencies across England that might be able to help if you are a literature-based organisation.

## Contact us

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