

**The RCSheriff Trust**  
Advancing The Arts in Elmbridge For Over 30 Years  
**1993-2024**

**Grant  
Guidelines  
2026**

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**Please Note:**

**Please read the guidelines on the next pages carefully before applying. All applicants must contact the Trust's Director, Pete Allen, at [arts@rcsherifftrust.org.uk](mailto:arts@rcsherifftrust.org.uk) for an informal discussion before completing the application form.**

Thank you for your interest in The R C Sheriff Trust's Arts Grants, our funding programme for arts activities that engage residents in Elmbridge and supports arts organisations, practitioners, individuals and groups using the arts to carry out their work. We are able to award grants up to £1,000. There are four Arts Grants deadlines each year.

The awards we make through our Arts Grants help us to achieve our mission of 'advancing the arts in Elmbridge.

**This Grant Pack applies to the following grant schemes:**

**Project Grants for Organisations and Individuals**

**Underwriting Grants**

**Capital Grants (for Venues and Arts Organisations)**

## **Dates for 2026**

### **Application Deadlines**

Monday 12 January 2026  
Monday 13 April 2026  
Monday 6 July 2026  
Monday 5 October 2026

### **Trustees Meeting**

Tuesday 27 January 2026  
Tuesday 28 April 2026  
Tuesday 28 July 2026  
Tuesday 27 October 2026

All enquiries and applications should be emailed to:

**[arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](mailto:arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk)**

or addressed to:

The R C Sherriff Trust  
Office 111,  
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Ashley Park House,  
42-50 Hersham Rd,  
Walton-on-Thames  
KT12 1RZ

email: [arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](mailto:arts@rcsherrifftrust.org.uk) [www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk](http://www.rcsherrifftrust.org.uk)

Registered Charity No.272527

## **Steps to apply for an R C Sheriff Trust Grant**

You've got a great idea. What next?

### **1 Read this guidance carefully**

This guidance explains the eligibility requirements for an R C Sheriff Trust Grant. Please read it carefully before you begin.

### **2 Is your activity right for The R C Sheriff Trust's Grant Programme?**

Please check if your activity is eligible for funding through The R C Sheriff Trust's Grant Programme. The list in the 'Eligibility' section of this guidance gives more information on what we can and cannot fund.

The application form asks which of the 'Aims of The Trust' that your application meets. The 'Aims of The Trust' can be found on page 5.

After you have read this guidance, please contact the Trust's Director. Be ready to clearly describe your activity to us, as this will help us give you good advice and will save time.

The R C Sheriff Trust's Grant Programme is a competitive programme. Please consider what you would do if we cannot fund your activity.

### **3 Fill in the application form.**

The application form asks you a series of questions about different parts of your activity including artistic quality, public engagement, management and finance.

This gives us information about you, the activity you are applying for and your budget. The Trustees will use this information to decide whether they will offer you a grant. If your application does not contain the information required, we might not be able to consider your application.

**We wish you success with your application.**

**Aims of the Trust:**

The R C Sheriff Trust supports the arts in Elmbridge, through its grant-making, for the following purposes:

- 1. To support and stimulate excellence, new ideas and innovation in the arts in the Borough, whether amateur or professional**
- 2. To invest in the creative talent of individual artists in Elmbridge and to provide opportunities for them to develop further their skills and knowledge**
- 3. To increase opportunities for all Elmbridge residents to take part in or experience high-quality arts activities, whatever their economic or social circumstances or age**
- 4. To increase resources and improve facilities for the arts in the borough**
- 5. To support and encourage initiatives aimed at the development of new audiences and venues for the arts in the borough**
- 6. To promote good practice in management, marketing, fundraising and educational work amongst arts organisations in Elmbridge, and to encourage collaboration.**

## **Criteria & Eligibility**

- All applicants must contact the Trust to discuss their applications with the Director before submitting them.
- Grants cannot be granted retrospectively. **The Event/Project must take place AFTER the Date of Trustees Decision**
- Decisions will be made at Trust Board meetings on the dates listed at the front of this pack and applicants will be notified of the results within two days of the meeting. Applications will only be considered for Projects scheduled to start at least three weeks after the date of decision. If in doubt, please check the timing of your application with the Trust.

## **Eligibility**

- All applicants must either be residents of the Borough of Elmbridge or be running their project in Elmbridge, for the benefit of Elmbridge residents.
- In the case of organisations, most of their membership should come from within the Borough and it should be perceived that they are an Elmbridge-based group.
- All successful applicants must issue a press release about their association with the Trust and use the items in the Marketing Pack, supplied by the Trust. (NB this condition may be waived in respect of some awards to individuals). The pack is supplied to successful applications. If you do not receive one, please call the office.
- Successful applicants are required to return monitoring forms and/or reports about the funded project after it has taken place. Failure to do so may affect future applications.
- If a grant offer is made, payment will only be released upon confirmation that all the money required for the project, is in place (except in the case of Underwriting Grants).
- Grant offers must be accepted within one month of the date of offer, or the offer will lapse.

## **Guidance for Organisations**

### **Who can apply:**

Arts organisations, both professional and amateur; Elmbridge schools/colleges, other Elmbridge organisations, voluntary and community groups who use the arts as part of their work/activities, or wish to host or run an arts event/project; and consortia of organisations or individual artists (one of the organisations or individuals involved would have to take a lead role by assuming responsibility for making the application and managing any grant).

What can you apply for:

Capital, Project or Underwriting Grants, purposes of which could include:

- Commissions of new work from professional artists
- Productions, performances, one-off arts events
- Tours of “artistic product” to the village and public halls, and arts venues around the borough
- Artists in residence, masterclasses
- Research and development, and experimental projects
- Educational programmes
- Participative arts activities, particularly for young people and retired people
- Marketing initiatives and audience development strategies
- Capital items such as equipment and improvements to facilities and buildings.

**Note 1** The Trust will only award grants to properly constituted, not-for-profit organisations, although they need not be registered charities.

**Note 2** Organisations applying for more than £500, must supply a set of their most recent Annual Accounts.

**Note 3** Organisations may apply for grants to **develop and improve** their repertoires, activities and skills, not to subsidise core activities. **The Trust will not fund the purchase of sheet music and scores.**

**Note 4** Your application may cover more than one activity.

**Note 5** The application form must be signed by the Chairperson or Treasurer of an organisation, unless by prior arrangement with the Trust's Director.

**Note 6** Payment for organisations will not normally be made payable to an individual, unless by prior arrangement with the Trust's Director.

**Note 7** Successful applicants may not reapply to the Trust within 12 months of their grant award, **although exceptions may occasionally be made in the**

**case of Underwriting grants if they are not required/taken up in the first instance.**

**Note 8** Unsuccessful applicants **may** reapply to the Trust within 12 months of their application.

**Note 9** Applications will not be considered if submitted after the application deadline for each quarter.

## **Guidance for Individuals**

### **Who can apply:**

Composers, craftspeople, curators, designers, directors, film-makers, musicians, performers, producers, promoters, theatre technicians, visual artists, writers and other individual arts practitioners.

What can you apply for:

Grants to assist with:

- Professional development and training (including travel grants) eg short courses in specific skills, work placements with other artists, specified periods of travel and/or study
- Research and development for arts projects
- The publication, production or exhibition of a specific piece of work
- Capital items e.g. equipment

**Note 10** Successful applicants may not reapply to the Trust within 12 months of their grant award, **although exceptions may occasionally be made in the case of Underwriting grants if they are not required/taken up in the first instance.**

**Note 11** Unsuccessful applicants **may** reapply to the Trust within 12 months of their application.

**Note 12** If successful, applicants can apply once a year for a maximum of two consecutive years, after which they must wait at least one complete financial year (January – December) before applying again.

**What We Do Not Fund:**

- Activities that are not arts-related
- Higher education courses, long-term vocational training e.g. Drama School, or ongoing training programmes (e.g. piano lessons, regular dance classes).
- Fundraising events, e.g. special performances in aid of a local charity
- Activities that provide no potential benefit to the public
- Activities which have already taken place; goods or services that have been bought or ordered before receiving an offer
- Commercial ventures which could recoup their costs from their profits (other than Underwriting grants for performances)
- Costs that are already covered by other funding
- Core costs i.e. ongoing overheads such as salaries, insurance, maintenance budgets for equipment or buildings
- The Trust will not fund the purchase of sheet music and scores.

**Financial Criteria:**

We expect you to find approximately 50% of the money you need from other sources (except in the case of Underwriting Grants). These can include:

- Earned income from your proposed arts activity
- Funding from public organisations such as local authorities (i.e. Elmbridge Borough Council, Surrey County Arts), the Arts Council South East, the Heritage Lottery Fund etc
- Grants from other Trusts and Foundations
- Business sponsorship
- Fundraising activities
- A contribution from you or from your organisation's reserves

**Levels of Grant are available**

Project and Capital awards are unlikely to exceed £1000.

Underwriting Grants are unlikely to exceed £1000 for a series/run of performances, or £500 for a one-off performance.

Awards to individuals are unlikely to exceed £500, except for large-scale ventures.

## Underwriting Grants

This flexible scheme has been introduced specifically for the support of any arts event, amateur or professional, that is anticipated to "break even" financially. The Trust is keen to ensure that local organisations do not make a financial loss, but it may not use its charitable funds to help create a surplus. Therefore, we will only offer Underwriting Grants for events where there is the potential (however small) for a profit to be made. Please read the notes for this category, below, and, if necessary, seek further advice from the Trust's Director.

When applying for an Underwriting grant please complete the Cover Sheet and Parts A, B and D of the application form. Part D is a special budget that will ask you for the maximum box office achievable (i.e. if every ticket were sold at full price) and the minimum estimated box office (i.e. your lowest expected return, usually 50% of the venue capacity at the lowest priced ticket). The Trust will consider underwriting the difference between your lowest expected box office return and the cost of the event. The amount of your grant relates directly to your ticket sales.

### A sample budget for your event –

Expenditure (cost of event):	£750	
Maximum box office income:	£1000	e.g. 100 tickets @ £10 each
Estimated minimum income:	£500	e.g. 50 tickets @ £10 each

Underwriting grant = £750 (expenditure) minus £500 (lowest estimated income)  
Therefore, the Trust would offer a maximum underwriting grant of £250.

After the event, you submit an Income and Expenditure report to the Trust.  
The following are examples of the possible outcomes:

**Actual income £500:** £750 (expenditure) minus £500 (income) = **£250**,  
maximum underwriting grant paid

**Actual income £650:** £750 (expenditure) minus £650 (income) = **£100**,  
underwriting grant paid

**Actual income £1000** minus £750 expenditure = **£250 profit**  
No underwriting grant required.

## **Capital Funding**

This fund supports:

Specific, arts-related enhancements to venues in the Borough, such as the purchase of stage lighting, sound equipment or specialist fixtures and fittings, e.g. stage curtains, sprung floors, induction loops etc. **The venue must have a significant, valued element of arts programming in order to qualify for a grant.**

The purchase of instruments or items of specific, arts-related equipment, by non-building-based arts organisations, to improve the resources available in the Borough.

Please note that the R C Sherriff Trust does not put money into 'bricks and mortar'.

The Trust will not fund the purchase of sheet music and scores.

### **Application is by formal written proposal, which must include the following:**

#### **For venues:**

- the type and amount of arts usage (if it is a multi-purpose venue, such as a village hall) with, for example, a profile of a typical user group
- the current state of the venue
- what improvements are required, and why (e.g. what, if anything, they are replacing; how the various user groups and their audiences will benefit from them; how they will improve the artistic standards or training opportunities)
- how long it will take to implement and complete the enhancements
- who will provide any training needed in the use and maintenance of these new facilities, for the venue staff/volunteers and for members of the user groups; what will be the timescale for this; and how will it be funded.

#### **For arts organisations:**

- why the equipment is needed (e.g. what, if anything, it is replacing; how it will improve the artistic standards or training opportunities or how the members and/or audience will benefit in other ways), the time-scale for purchasing and installing the equipment
- who will provide any training needed in the use and maintenance of this equipment, for members of the arts group, and how will this be funded
- the arrangements for making this equipment available to other arts organisations in the locality and for training them in its use and maintenance

#### **For Venues & Organisations:**

- A full financial budget relating to the proposed work/purchase must be enclosed with your proposal (in addition to a copy of the organisation's most recent Annual Accounts if you are applying for more than £500).
- The budget must show the full costing for the project, and how this will be covered ie how much money can be raised from other funding sources and how much (the balance) you are requesting from the R C Sherriff Trust.
- The application must also show evidence that the organisation has sought three quotes from different suppliers/contractors for the work/equipment, and
- A copy of the estimate from the successful 'bidder' must be included, with an explanation of the choice.

If a grant offer is made, payment will only be released upon confirmation that all the money has been raised for the project; and the applicant will be asked to submit copies of receipts for the work/equipment, upon completion.

**Please note that applicants can apply for a maximum of 50% of the cost of the project, whether venue enhancement or new equipment, and that the Trust is unlikely to award grants of more than £1500, unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

**What do I do now?**

Once you have spoken with The Trust's Director, please complete and return the application form, or submit your proposal (for capital grants), by one of the four deadlines quoted on the title page.

R C Sheriff Trust  
January 2026