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Cultural and Creative Sector Sources of Funding and Support

Figurative offers a range of financial and additional support to cultural and creative organisations, but if our current offer isn't right for you, we list a number of other funding and support sources below.

[Figurative](#) provides [repayable finance](#) to socially driven cultural and creative organisations to help them become more sustainable and resilient. We also support organisations looking to develop their [philanthropic fundraising](#), and have produced a range of [resources](#) on the topics of impact, investment and innovation in the cultural and creative sector.

If none of these options is right for your organisation, you might want to consider alternative funders and resources. We've signposted a number of these below.

This list is not exhaustive and we cannot guarantee that you will be able to access funding and support via these routes, but we hope it will give you some ideas of where to turn outside of Figurative. If you want to amend or suggest a listing, please [contact us](#).

Other Funding Sources

Social investors and repayable finance

Social investment is a form of repayable finance designed to help organisations achieve a social purpose.

- The [Good Finance](#) database allows you to search for social investors across the UK, with the option to filter by region, amount needed and financial product type.
- [Creative UK](#) – the Creative Growth Finance Fund provides scale-up finance to the UK's most promising creative businesses with loans ranging from £100,000–£1million.

Trusts and foundations

- [Esmée Fairbairn Foundation](#) – grants and social investment for charitable organisations that support the foundation's three strategy pillars – our natural world, a fairer future and creative, confident communities.
- [Foyle Foundation](#) (until 2025) – grants for registered charities with a core remit of the arts or learning. Please note the Foundation will complete its grant giving programme in 2025 – applications will close January 2025.
- [Freelands Foundation](#) – grants for UK registered charities who have a core remit of visual arts or art education.
- [Paul Hamlyn Foundation](#) – funds focused on arts, education and learning, migration and young people. Its two main grant funds for the arts focus on arts-based learning and art and social change.
- [Garfield Weston Foundation](#) – project, revenue and capital grants to charitable arts organisations that engage with a variety of audiences and can demonstrate excellence and impact. It also supports museum and heritage organisations.
- [The Wolfson Foundation](#) – supports arts and culture in the UK through funding capital projects at museums and galleries, historic sites, educational institutions and performing arts organisations.
- [John Ellerman Foundation](#) – grants for creators and curators, mainly outside of London.
- [The Fore](#) – funding and support for small charities transforming lives and society.

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- [Clare Duffield Foundation](#) – grants to support cultural learning in arts and heritage organisations, leadership training in the cultural and social sectors and enhancing Jewish life.
- [PRS Foundation](#) – charitable funder of new music and talent development.
- [Rayne Foundation](#) – grant funding for projects that promote a fairer society and positive social change. Focusing particularly on children and young people, refugees and asylum seekers, and older people and their carers.
- [UK Community Foundations \(UKCF\)](#) – the national membership organisation for accredited community foundations in the UK. Making a positive difference through place-based philanthropy.

Public funding sources

- [Arts Council England](#)
- [Arts Council of Northern Ireland](#)
- [Arts Council of Wales](#)
- [Creative Scotland](#)
- [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)
- [BFI](#) (British Film Institute) lottery funding
- [Lottery Good Causes](#) (for other sources of lottery funding)
- [Arts and Humanities Research Council \(AHRC\)](#)
- [Innovate UK](#) – (part of [UKRI](#)) helps companies grow through their development and commercialisation of new products, processes and services.
- [Digital Catapult](#) – focuses on significant challenges and opportunities facing the UK's economy and society, where technology can play a major role in providing solutions.
- [Watershed Immersive Arts](#) – a three-year UK-wide programme helping artists explore the potential of immersive tools within their creative practice.

Funding and support for EDI (Equity, Diversity & Inclusion) focused organisations

- [Do It Now Now](#) – open innovation organisation committed to bringing social empowerment to Black communities across the globe.
- [UnLtd Awards](#) – funding and support for social entrepreneurs trying to start up or grow their social business. Around 50% of the Awards will support social entrepreneurs who come from a disabled and/or Black, Asian or minority ethnic background.
- [Growth Impact Fund](#) – developed by Big Issue Invest and UnLtd, this fund offers investment and support to organisations with diverse representation at board and leadership level.
- [Create Equity](#) – funding, campaigns and support hub for racially equitable investment in the arts, social enterprise and commercial industries.
- [Black South West Network](#) – Black-led infrastructure organisation based in Bristol runs various business support, funding and incubator programmes. They also run the [CultureBiz Connect](#) programme in partnership with [Diverse Artists Network](#) (DAN) and Creative Powertown.
- [Pathway Fund](#) – Black and Ethnically Minoritised-led social investment 'wholesaler' testing innovative approaches to support social investments for Black and Ethnically Minoritised communities.
- [MeWe360](#) – a black-led, not-for-profit organisation that champions Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic entrepreneurs in the arts and creative industries.

Funding databases and lists

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- [Grants Online](#) – a comprehensive list of open grant funds for arts, culture and heritage organisations.
- [My Funding Central](#) – a comprehensive database of grant and contract funding in England. Free for organisations with income under £30,000. Note that the website doesn't post opportunities for individuals, only organisations.
- [ArtULTRA](#) – a list of funding opportunities for individual artists.
- [Lottery Good Causes](#) – a search engine for funding programmes by the organisations distributing National Lottery funding.
- [Arts Council England](#) – a funding list to help artists and organisations navigate the available funding opportunities outside of ACE funds.
- [GrantNav](#) – to search, filter and download data about where funding goes and how much is given across billions of pounds of grants, for causes and locations across the UK.

Angel investment

Angel investors provide initial seed money for start-ups, usually in exchange for ownership equity in the company.

- [The Angel Investment Network](#) – create a pitch and put your idea in front of thousands of active angel investors.
- [Angel Academe](#) – investing in female founded tech businesses.

Business support: capacity-building for social investment

Support (funds, advice and consultancy) for organisations looking to develop their business models and take on social investment.

- [Creative United](#) – supports the arts, cultural and creative industries through innovative business growth programmes and membership schemes.
- [Stepping Stones Fund](#) – an investment readiness programme for charitable organisations in Greater London.
- [Pilotlight](#) – a capacity-building programme to team up charities and social entrepreneurs with senior professionals from private and public sector organisations.
- [Cranfield Trust](#) – a national charity providing pro bono management support to charities through highly skilled volunteers from the commercial sector.
- [ArtsVentures](#) – consultancy that helps arts organisations explore enterprise models and alternative funding mechanisms.
- [Reach Fund](#) (England only) – a grant fund that helps charities and social enterprises raise investment. You must be referred to the programme by a Reach Fund access point, such as Figurative.
- [UnLtd](#) – offers awards for social entrepreneurs at the start of their journey, combining funding and support to help nurture ideas and grow impact.

Banks

For organisations looking for longer term secured finance, such as a mortgage:

- [Charity Bank](#) – dedicated to lending to charities and social enterprises, offering loans for property purchases, working capital, and other social impact projects.
- [Triodos](#) – a sustainable bank that provides loans and mortgages to social enterprises, charities and community projects with a focus on positive environmental and social impact.
- [CAF Bank](#) – a bank supporting charities and social purpose organisations with tailored loans, deposits and other banking services to help them achieve their missions.
- [Unity Trust Bank](#) – a socially focused bank offering commercial loans and finance solutions to charities, social enterprises and community-focused organisations.

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Resources and Toolkits

Creative industries

- [Creative Hub Leader's Toolkit](#) – initially designed for the Creative Hub Academy but contains lots of useful exercises on mapping your vision and mission, stakeholder relationships and developing impact measurement.

Social investment guides

- [Good Finance](#) helps charities and social enterprises navigate the world of social investment. It provides an overview of the market and social investors, offers case studies and has resources on measuring social impact.
- [NPC](#) – a guide to social investment for charities.

Social entrepreneurship resources

- [UnLtd](#) – a comprehensive library of resources for social business planning.
- [The Small Charities Coalition](#) – a wide range of resources available for small charities, from accounting advice to trustee recruitment.
- [NPC Resource Hub](#) – an independent think tank for the charity sector with high quality resources covering a broad range of topics.
- [The Directory of Social Change](#) – information and training for voluntary organisations. They publish several funding guides and handbooks, including The Arts Funding Guide and The Complete Fundraising Handbook, as well as regional guides.
- [The School for Social Entrepreneurs](#) – a range of courses for purpose-led organisations looking to build their capacity and resilience.
- [Social Business Wales](#) – provides intensive one-to-one support to social businesses across Wales which are looking to expand or create jobs.

Social impact resources and evidence

- [NPC – Starting to measure your impact](#) – a hub of resources and tools building on the legacy of the [Inspiring Impact](#) programme. Includes several step-by-step self-assessment tools to review and improve your impact practice.
- [How to build a theory of change](#) – NCVO's step-by-step guidance on producing a theory of change for a project or organisation. See also NPC's [Theory of Change in 10 Steps](#) and Figurative's [Theory of Change Guide & Template](#).
- [The Impact Management Project](#) – a comprehensive resource on impact management.
- [Culture Case](#) – a database of academic research on the cultural sector, including insight and evidence on the value and social impact of culture.
- [National Alliance for Arts in Criminal Justice – Evidence Library](#) – a searchable library on the impact of arts-based projects on criminal justice.
- [Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance](#) - information about creative or cultural practice that relates to health and wellbeing, including manifestos, toolkits and evidence guides.
- [The DCMS CASE database](#) – allows you to search over 12,000 studies on engagement in culture and sport in an online database (please note that latest records are from 2012).

Application writing

- [The White Pube](#) – a library of successful funding applications including ACE project grants and developing your creative practice.