



Royal Female School of Art Foundation
Widening Access to Arts Education in Greater London

Guidance for Grant Applicants

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Our mission

The RFSA Foundation mission is to widen access to the arts, design and associated professions by supporting those who might otherwise be unable to start or stay in further and higher education, in Greater London. They may be suffering disadvantage because of financial hardship, cultural barriers, physical or mental disability, or caring responsibilities.

All our work is shaped by our values, which inform everything we do:

Commitment – to addressing disadvantage and making a real difference now and in the future

Integrity – being open, honest and accountable in everything we do

Collaboration – working together with educational and third sector organisations

Knowledge – acquiring, utilising and sharing knowledge of the sector and its needs

Innovation – engaging in innovative methods of service, being flexible and embracing change in education and learning

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

A strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is at the heart of our values and is a fundamental part of our vision to widen access to the arts, design and associated professions for all in Greater London. Through its grant making, the RFSA aims to support recipients to overcome barriers to their full inclusion and participation in further and higher arts education.

Our history

The Royal Female School of Art Foundation (RFSA) is a small grant-giving charity based in central London. The Charity's origins date back to the founding of the Royal Female School of Art in 1842. The school was established under royal patronage, with the aim of educating young women in the arts and allowing them to gain "honourable and profitable employment". Whilst the school was later subject to a merger, its ethos is continued by the RFSA charity and its Trustees, who are custodians of the school's historic funds and assets.

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Our funding priorities

We want to support the artistic and financial sustainability of all students to ensure the widest range of people can participate in further and higher art education. Reaching students in hardship is a key element that makes the RFSA distinctive from other grant-making foundations and an essential part of our grant-making criteria.

To achieve our mission, the Foundation provides financial assistance to educational organisations to benefit individual students. As well as funding arts and design studies, the Foundation will consider supporting musical and other cross-discipline arts studies.

Grants are available to assist individual students accessing or studying further or higher education, such as on vocational, BTEC, HND, foundation or first-degree courses. Funding is also available for informal learning that provides access into formal education for adults who face barriers such as disrupted career paths, personal disadvantages or language problems. Courses to deliver this learning should have clear outcomes and we encourage applicants to consider partnerships with local organisations in the design and provision of such learning.

Financial assistance can take the form of:

- (i) Grants for bursaries to cover the cost of students' maintenance, tuition fees and travel expenses.
- (ii) Grants for the purchase of students' equipment, tools and books.
- (iii) Grants which support students (including prospective students) who by reason of pregnancy, childbirth, caring or parenthood, suffer disadvantage.
- (iv) Support for individuals' progression into arts education.
- (v) Support for the provision of progression routes into the arts, development of skills, enterprise and professional experience.

Application criteria and considerations

Please consider these grant criteria and considerations when completing your application.

Eligibility: The Foundation only funds educational and charitable organisations involved in the provision of arts education or related arts outreach activities. Only organisations whose beneficiaries live or study in Greater London may apply for a grant. Students may benefit from the charity's funds regardless of gender.

Distribution of funds: The Foundation has limited funds to distribute on an annual basis and these funds are usually oversubscribed. The trustees' policy is to make a number of grants rather than one or two large ones.

Length of funding: Funding will normally be for one year.

What we don't fund

The following are items for which RFSa grant funding is *not* available:

- Direct grants to individuals (including student grants or bursaries)
- Major capital schemes
- In response to general appeals
- To relieve public funds or where funding should come from mainstream sources
- Postgraduate study
- **Note:** funds for MA students will only be awarded in exceptional circumstances

Application process

Applications requirements

- Applications from institutions must state how the project meets the mission and one or more funding priorities of the RFSa. They must also state how the project will benefit students and the number of students who are likely to benefit.
- Should an organisation submit more than one application or an application in multiple parts, the applicant must rank each application or part thereof in order of priority.
- The trustees expect institutions to submit an application for a global amount for maintenance and/or tuition fees, travel or similar expenses, which the institutions can then allocate to individual students. For outreach programmes or similar, the application should include a global amount followed by individual project budget(s).
- Payment of grants will only be on receipt of a completed claim form and will be paid in arrears. Payment must be claimed by 1 October of the following academic year in which the bid was made. If you require the grant to be paid urgently, you must advise the RFSa and claim in good time.

Application timescales

Applications are invited in the spring term each year, for the following academic year. The deadline for submission of application forms is usually 1st May. Trustees meet in June or July to consider applications and successful applicants will be notified after this meeting.

A monitoring report providing an update on how the grant is progressing will be requested for the following May, with grants to be claimed by the October following the end of the academic year.

The trustees will not consider applications outside this timeframe.

Liaising with RFSa

A named co-ordinator should be identified to liaise with the RFSa. The co-ordinator will be required to submit the monitoring report referred to above. Once the project is complete, a grant claim should be submitted (payments are not made in advance). A block grant payment will be sent to the co-ordinator rather than individual students.

Fund allocation and monitoring

The trustees will wish to know that a proper process is in place to allocate and monitor the use of funds as follows:

- a small group should be responsible within the institution for making decisions on grants to individual students and determine who will monitor the use of the grant
- the organisation must be able to explain how it ensures transparency and objectivity in the award of individual bursaries, alongside the processes in place to monitor use of funds
- the process should include receiving an application from the individual student which would need to be supported by the student's tutor or equivalent
- at the end of the process, a monitoring report will need to be submitted to the trustees to outline how the funds were allocated, by whom, to which priority groups and why, alongside how successful grants were in enabling students to progress towards their goals
- the monitoring report should include anonymised testimonies as well as data on grant beneficiaries (e.g. a breakdown of gender and other relevant equalities categories)
- the trustees reserve the right to carry out spot checks and audit the use of the funds.

Amendments to Grants

Successful grant applicants should note that the trustees are very unlikely to agree that unspent monies are rolled over into the next financial year. In addition, once a grant is approved, it is expected that the use of the grant (including the number of beneficiaries) will not be altered. Where changes are unavoidable, successful applicants must obtain the trustees' approval for these changes, before expenditure is incurred or committed.

Application tips

How to submit the best application

- Ensure your application states how the project meets the mission and one or more funding priorities of the RFSA.
- Please write in clear simple English and avoid jargon.
- Make sure the application is fact based, with figures and evidence which support your claims.
- Don't take up too much space explaining the general issues you face, please assume the trustees have a basic understanding of your operating environment and institutional history.
- Ensure that you've highlighted your organisation's impact, track record and partnerships, but only where relevant. Be as succinct as possible.

*Please contact the **Foundation Secretary & Grants Manager** with any queries regarding your application, monitoring report or claims on **020 3778 0677** or admin@rfsafoundation.org*