

ARTS BURSARY APPLICATION INFORMATION

Get £2,000 to grow your arts practice!

Offset is working in partnership with MK Community Foundation to award three arts bursaries of £2,000 each.

The arts bursary is open to individual artists and those who are developing an arts practice in Milton Keynes, aged 15 - 25 years. Each £2,000 bursary is intended to help individuals to make new developments in their creative practice and support them to achieve excellence in their future work.

Purpose of the bursaries

These bursaries are all about supporting Milton Keynes based artists, aged 15-25, to take their next step on their journey to artistic excellence. This could mean developing new work, growing skills, expanding capacity, or elevating their ambitions through testing new, innovative ideas.

Throughout 2024, three bursaries of £2,000 each will be awarded to three individual artists who show potential for excellence. One of these bursaries will be the Stephen Groom Memorial Bursary and will be awarded to the individual whose arts practice particularly reflects the creative values championed by the late artist, Stephen Groom.

The Stephen Groom Memorial Bursary

A bursary dedicated to the life and work of Newport Pagnell born artist Stephen Groom (1951 – 2022). As a young person, Stephen was encouraged to explore his own creativity by an inspirational art teacher at Ousedale School, who motivated him to follow his dreams and apply to art school.

At the age of 18 he went to Leeds University, and then later The Royal Academy of Art where he achieved a Masters in Fine Art. Inspired by Dadaism and surreal, often comedic art, he championed the absurd and the performative. He went on to exhibit his artwork at MK Gallery, set up The North Bucks Young Surrealist Association, and perform his music under multiple pseudonyms including Bingo, Big Laundry Bill and the much-loved Jimi Volcano.

In keeping with Stephen's values of playfulness, authenticity, and honesty this bursary will be awarded to a young artist who's especially keen to experiment, challenge themselves and others, and explore the world through a unique lens.

INFORMATION ON APPLYING

Who can apply

Any individual artist aged 15-25 years who is living, being educated, or working in Milton Keynes can apply. By artist, we mean any person who creates artwork as part of their education, career, or hobby. This could be in any contemporary artform, for example:

- Visual arts, craft and design
- Digital and media
- Performance art
- Literature

The list is not exhaustive so if you do not see your preferred artform/s, please do not worry, these are simply examples. Artists are not limited to one medium, activity or skill.

Applications are welcomed from all artists. We encourage those who feel they are underrepresented in creative or 'mainstream' arts spaces to apply.

Under 16s must seek consent from a parent or guardian to apply.

What the bursary can be spent on

Bursary money can be spent on anything that supports you to make new developments in your creative practice and helps you to achieve excellence in your future work.

For example, this could include:

- Research trips to inspire, influence and broaden creative horizons
- Materials or resources to make new work or test new ideas
- Training and development opportunities to grow practical skills or knowledge
- Partnering or collaborating with other artists and creatives to develop artistic practice

Please note that if you are awarded a bursary, you must be in a position to spend the funds within 12 months of receipt. We will stay in touch with bursary winners to understand how the bursary has benefitted them, and champion their artistic journey.

Application & judging criteria

The panel of judges will be looking for artists:

1. With examples of current artwork or arts practice which demonstrates potential for excellence

We're not looking for current artwork which is 'perfect'. After all, what does that really mean? We're looking for examples of artwork or arts practice which show potential for excellence. By this we mean work that has the potential to grow one or more of the following qualities:

- originality
- innovation

- ambition
- technical skill
- carefully considered use of media, materials or artforms

2. Who have a clear idea of how a bursary will support their next steps

We're looking for artists who have given careful thought to how a bursary will help them develop their practice and take it to the next level, both in the short and long term.

How to apply

You'll need to:

Complete an online application form [which can be accessed by clicking here.](#)

Within the form, you'll be asked to tell us about your arts practice, learning, and achievements to date; how you would spend the bursary and what you hope to gain from this; and a plan for how you aim to develop your practice over the next 12 months. You'll also have the option to provide a short reference from someone who can advocate for your arts practice.

We encourage you to read the questions carefully and take time to consider how best to answer them.

If you would prefer to submit a voice recording instead, please click here to download a list of the application questions you will need to answer.

Share examples of your current work

You'll be able to send us up to three examples of your artwork/arts practice (images, video clips, or written work). Each work should be accompanied by a short description. You'll have the option to share with us any social media platforms, handles or websites that you would like us to be aware of.

Please note that incomplete applications will not be considered.

Application deadlines

You can choose to apply to any of the bursaries below. When we receive your application, it will automatically be reviewed in the current round.

Round 1: £2,000

Deadline: 31 January 2024

Round 2: £2,000

Deadline: 31 May 2024

Round 3: £2,000

Deadline: 30 September 2024

If you're unsuccessful in one bursary round, you can apply again in a following round. See our FAQs for tips on reapplying.

The deadline for the final round is 30 September 2024. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

FAQS

How do I apply?

[Please click here to complete an online application form](#) and share your examples of your work with us. If you would prefer to submit a voice recording, please click here to download a list of the things you will need to tell us and how you can share examples of your work with us.

Who will select the winners?

Applications in each bursary round will be reviewed, shortlisted and selected by a panel of judges including individuals aged 15-25 representing youth communities from across Milton Keynes. The panel will also include representatives from Offset Projects and MK Community Foundation.

Can I apply for more than one bursary?

You can only submit one application per bursary round. However, if your application is unsuccessful in one round, you can apply for the next one.

I was unsuccessful in one bursary round, how can I improve my application for another round?

Here are our top tips:

- Have you been concise in your answer? Try to plan the key points you'd like to share, use clear and straightforward language and remove unnecessary phrases. Be mindful of 'over explaining'.
- Consider whether there are different examples of your arts practice, past experiences or achievements that could more effectively show your potential.
- Is there a clear link between your plans for the bursary money in the short term and how this will help you in the long term?
- Ask a trusted friend, family member or professional to read your application and provide constructive feedback.

Is the bursary accessible to all?

We aim to ensure that we reduce any potential barriers faced by applicants. Please contact us if you would like to discuss additional support to ensure equal access to this opportunity – we would be happy to hear from you.

A large print version of this document is available for download at offsetprojects.org.uk/bursaries.

For all information, downloadable documents, and a link to apply, please visit offsetprojects.org.uk/bursaries.