

OCTOBER 2020

CULTURAL RECOVERY FUND

INC ARTS' SNAP SURVEY FINDINGS



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ABOUT INC ARTS

<https://incarts.uk>

Inc Arts is a national collective that champions the creative, economic and contractual rights of the UK's ethnically diverse workforce. We work collaboratively across the arts and cultural sector to create peer-led solutions to redress under-representation and lack of diversity in our creative teams and workplaces. We do this through research and advocacy, creating bespoke Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) solutions to arts organisations, and providing a network of advice, support and fellowship to the diverse arts workforce, across all art forms and seniority and throughout the UK.

CULTURAL RECOVERY FUND

INC ARTS conducted a snap poll of ethnically diverse arts sector leaders (Artistic Directors, Executive Directors and equivalent roles), and London-based leaders whose work primarily target diverse audiences. The poll was open over 4 days, and was supported by interviews with a selection of the survey group.

The group was asked to share their experiences, outcomes and opinions of the Cultural Recovery Fund.

03 WHO APPLIED?

Of the 31 respondents

32% Applied, all of whom received 100% of the amount applied for. Applications ranged from £15,000 to £260,000.

WHO DIDN'T?

68% Didn't apply.

WHY NOT?

57% We are not buildings based: we felt this application wasn't for us

43% We had reserves: we couldn't evidence 'risk of imminent closure

14% We didn't have reserves but couldn't evidence 'risk of imminent closure'

33% Scale of operations: we didn't feel this funding was aimed at an organisation of our size.

24% The minimum amount stated in the conditions for application was a barrier for us.

19% The timescale for application was a barrier for us

14% We didn't have an existing programme of work so felt that we couldn't apply

FEEDBACK



The message was clear...this funding wasn't for us...



Respondents comments included

Initial advice from our relationship manager was that we were not eligible and we were discouraged from applying. This advice change a week before the deadline but by then it was too late.

We were also advised not to apply unless the company was on its knees.

We told not to apply, although we have seen similar organisations who have applied.

I am a freelance artist who up to COVID led on many projects. I did not think the recovery fund was for me as I am not an NPO

Our ACE relationship manager advised that this probably wasn't the right fit for us

We are a new organisation

INSIGHTS

Inconsistency - and non-inclusive processes

Inc Arts asked respondents, **'To what degree do you think diversity was considered in the drafting of these funding guidelines?'** Views ranged from moderate 'I do think they are trying' through to 'not at all'.



'Not enough, unfortunately as a deaf led company we felt the time frame was so short to apply and luckily we have a hearing ED and freelance fundraiser to support us who completed the application, but as a deaf led company, like most deaf/disabled organisations we need more info in BSL and a longer time frame to account for translation etc which just was not given'

Not at all - funding seems to have gone to large mainstream institutions only. It is concerning that so many smaller, diverse-led and/or touring companies were told by ACE RMs not to apply, yet (...) went on to receive half a million. It was also shocking to see commercial companies receiving funds - we had thought it was for NPOs only.

This process does not seem to have been consistent, transparent, or fair... It seems like smaller companies have been deliberately excluded and left to die... it has been very poorly handled.



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RECOMMENDATIONS

DIVERSIFY THE DECISION MAKERS

The advice given by Relationship Managers is critical. Funding decisions are made by predominantly non-diverse teams. There is strong anecdotal evidence (shared by both diverse and non-diverse leaders) that diversifying the decision-making process will increase empathy with and understanding of diverse-led work.

TRANSPARENCY AND CONSISTENCY OF ADVICE

Diverse practitioners welcomed greater transparency of questions asked by those seeking funding, and responses given during funding application processes.

ALLOCATE 15% R&D FOR DIVERSE-LED ORGANISATIONS

Diverse led organisations reflected on their relatively conservative funding requests compared to those of non-diverse organisations of similar scale.

A 15% allocation for research and development would recognise the additional capacity required by some organisations to respond at pace.

FUNDING THAT RECOGNISES AND REDRESSES EXISTING INEQUALITIES IN THE SECTOR

Venues-based organisations, and larger organisations, are predominantly non-diverse. Funding is urgently required that is adaptable to the needs and continued existence of smaller-scale, non-buildings based diverse-led organisations.