

## Creative high streets fund

### 1. Introduction

Grants are available for local organisations and community groups to put on creative and cultural activities in our high street areas. The funding for the grants comes from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority's Regional Recovery Fund.

Creativity and culture are fundamental to who we are and where we live. They help people connect to a sense of place and supports community cohesion, health and wellbeing. They can make us feel good and enrich our lives.

**Creativity** describes the 'process through which people apply their knowledge, skills and intuition to imagine, conceive, express or make something that wasn't there before'<sup>1</sup>.

**Culture** is a broad concept that, when applied to local communities, could include festivals and events, heritage, libraries/literature, museums, music venues, parks and open spaces, public art, theatres and performing arts<sup>2</sup>

Our high streets are key areas where residents and visitors can actively take part in creative and cultural activities. We are offering grants to local voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations or town/parish councils, to **deliver creative and cultural activities in our high street areas during 2026**.

We believe that there are brilliant ideas out there in our community and want to help bring them to life, to ensure creativity and culture is accessible to all.

### 2. General principles

- Grants are available to voluntary, community or social enterprise organisations and town and parish councils who are based in South Gloucestershire.
- They must be used to deliver creative and cultural activities in any of our 9 high street areas – Chipping Sodbury, Downend, Filton, Hanham, Kingswood, Patchway, Staple Hill, Thornbury, Yate (Station Road). Check Appendix 1 for maps of the high street area boundaries.
- Applicants can apply for a grant from £1,000 to £5,000 to fund the revenue costs of activities. Check the exclusions and restrictions section below for more details.

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<sup>1</sup> [Arts Council England](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Commission on Culture and Local Government](#), p.7

- The application deadline is **Sunday 25 January 2026**.
- Grants will be awarded in full (subject to checks) by **28 February 2026** and must be spent by the end of 2026. If the grant is unspent, it must be returned.
- Any relevant insurances, licences, notices, permissions and health and safety risk assessments must be in place prior to the activities being delivered. We may carry out spot checks to ensure this. If you need guidance on this, please contact [highstreets@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:highstreets@southglos.gov.uk).
- Grants will be subject to the availability of funds and are unlikely to be approved if there is already substantial provision of the proposed activity in the area.
- A monitoring process will be in place to ensure the grant is spent as agreed. All successful applicants must engage in this process and therefore all receipts must be kept.

### 3. How the grant can be used

The grant can be used to fully or part fund the revenue costs for new or enhanced creative and cultural activities that will benefit our high streets.

Revenue costs are the operational or running costs of the activity.

These could include (note, this is not an exhaustive list):

- materials and short-term use equipment
- expenses for volunteers
- room hire costs
- marketing or promotional activities
- creative practitioner fees
- staff fees (if they are employed solely or partly for delivering the specified activity)

By 'enhanced', we mean that elements of an existing activity e.g. an annual summer event, is changed and creativity applied so that it is perceived to be different from the last years' event (a new theme, new performers, new audiences for instance).

Examples of activities include (but are not limited to): festivals or events, pop up theatre, outdoor music performances, story walks and talks, public art, high street trails, workshops or demonstrations, exhibitions and museum or heritage activities.

### 4. Exclusions and restrictions

- Grants cannot be made to individuals, businesses or 'for profit' organisations. (however, fees could be paid to these stakeholders, e.g. a creative practitioner<sup>3</sup> if

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<sup>3</sup> A Creative Practitioner is someone who uses creativity as a central part of their professional work.

they are partnered with voluntary, community or social enterprise organisations and town and parish councils).

- Grants will not be given to support activities outside the high streets' areas and/or that do not relate to creativity and culture.
- Grants will not be given to cover core costs, that are not directly related to the delivery of the activity, including general running costs, which are already covered by other funding or that should be covered by your own resources.
- Grants will not be given to cover capital costs, i.e. expenses related to acquiring, improving, or maintaining long-term assets of your organisation, things that are not consumed or used up in the short term. These could include property, major equipment, significant IT systems, furniture/fixtures and fittings.
- Grants cannot be used for activities of a political nature or for activities that have already taken place.
- Only one application per organisation will be considered.
- You must not start the activity or purchase any requested items until you have received your grant offer letter (unless you can otherwise fund these yourselves). We will not pay for any activities already started or items already purchased before our grant offer is confirmed. The grant also cannot be used as prize money or be redistributed into smaller grants.

## 5. Applying for funding

If after reading this guidance you feel you are eligible, have a spark of a creative idea and would like to discuss it before you apply, please contact [highstreets@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:highstreets@southglos.gov.uk) and we will arrange a time to speak to you.

The next step is to [register with the grants online system](#). If you are already registered, please make sure all your details are up to date (including bank account information). Note, if not already registered, this can take some time, so please allow for this.

Once you have completed the registration process, email [highstreets@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:highstreets@southglos.gov.uk) with the following details:

- name of the key contact
- organisation name and address
- brief description of activity (one sentence)
- proposed high street to benefit

We will then carry out the relevant eligibility checks and if there are no queries, we will send you the application form. If there are any queries, we will contact you.

You can then complete the application form and send to [highstreets@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:highstreets@southglos.gov.uk) by **Sunday 25 January 2026**.

## 6. Decision making and payment

Applications will be assessed by a delegated South Gloucestershire Council panel using the criteria of:

- the creativeness of the activity
- how accessible the activity is
- the number of people that the activity intends to engage in the high street
- how the activity could positively impact the health and wellbeing of those involved
- how the activity aligns with the council priorities

We may ask you some further questions if we need clarification on any information provided.

We will notify organisations and **award grants no later than 28 February 2026**.

The grant will not be paid until the registration requirements have been met by the applicant organisation.

There will be no process for appealing against the panel's decision.

## 7. Public record keeping

Information on all allocated grants are published on the [open data page](#) to meet the council's legal obligations under the local government transparency code.

## 8. Monitoring of delivery

The spend of the grant money will be subject to monitoring and audit. If a project or activity does not go ahead the awarded funding will need to be returned.

## 9. Publicity

Any publicity material arising from your activity should include an acknowledgement of funding. Please contact us for wording and logos to be used.

## Contact information

01454 868266

[highstreets@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:highstreets@southglos.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1

## Maps of the high street area boundaries











