



Grant Strategy

Didymus CIO

Introduction

Didymus was established in 2013 and in the past 11 years has made grants worth just over £2 million to a range of small charities operating in both the UK and overseas.

To date Didymus has used an open application process, with deadlines typically 2 or 3 times per year. A strategy review was undertaken in 2023, partly in response to the significant increase in funding applications the Trust has received in recent years. This new strategy outlines Didymus' funding priorities and new approach to funding processes.

Mission: "Widening access to and participation in the arts".

Our mission is to distribute grants to UK Registered Charities delivering high quality, creative projects, which widen access to and participation in the arts in Greater London and Yorkshire.

Why?

Engagement in the arts can be life changing. As well as providing entertainment, participating in the arts can help people to develop new skills, improve their health and wellbeing, and build social connections in their community¹. Engaging with the arts provides immediate benefits such as having fun, creative expression, and spending time with others, and also longer term impacts such as "shared memories, increased empathy and a broader worldview"². The NPC reports that "people who participate in the arts are more likely to be in good health, go on to further education, volunteer, and donate to charity"³. As a funder we want to enable more people to access these benefits.

¹ "Assessing the direct impact of the UK Arts sector", McKinsey & Company, November 2023, [Assessing the direct impact of the UK arts sector | McKinsey](#)

² "How can we engage more young people in Arts and Culture?", NPC, October 2019, [Arts-Engagement-Report-2019-web.pdf \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

³ "How can we engage more young people in Arts and Culture?", NPC, October 2019, [Arts-Engagement-Report-2019-web.pdf \(thinknpc.org\)](#)



However research shows that particular groups are less likely to access or participate in the arts. This includes people aged over 75, people from poorer backgrounds, people of BAME heritage, people who are unemployed, and those with a long standing disability or illness⁴. Some of the common barriers to participation include a mismatch between the public's interests and the cultural offer available, lack of representation⁵, the cost to participate, difficulties with the scheduling⁶, and physical and geographical access⁷.

As a funder we are keen to provide grants for high quality, creative and innovative arts projects that consciously engage those less likely to be involved, and / or aim to address barriers to participation. We believe that everyone should be able to access and participate in exciting and engaging arts projects, and our priority is to build the capacity of small charities who share this vision.

Our Funding Priorities

What: Through our grant making we aim to increase quality opportunities for those who are less likely to engage with the arts, or face barriers in doing so. Our focus is on funding projects and charities which make the arts accessible, inclusive, exciting, and enriching.

Who: We provide grants to small Registered Charities (income under £1 million), who directly provide high quality arts initiatives.

Where: We only fund projects which take place within the Yorkshire, or within Greater London (see appendix for geographical definitions).

How: Didymus provides grants of up to £10,000 per year over 3 years, and will consider core costs, project costs, and capital costs. Didymus is an invite only funder. We will seek out organisations who align with our priorities, and aim to develop a balanced portfolio. Through our website charities who meet our criteria can let us know about their work, and a small number may be invited to complete a funding application.

⁴ Taking Part Survey – Who Participates – Arts”, Office of National Statistics, 2016, [Who Participates - Arts | Tableau Public](#)

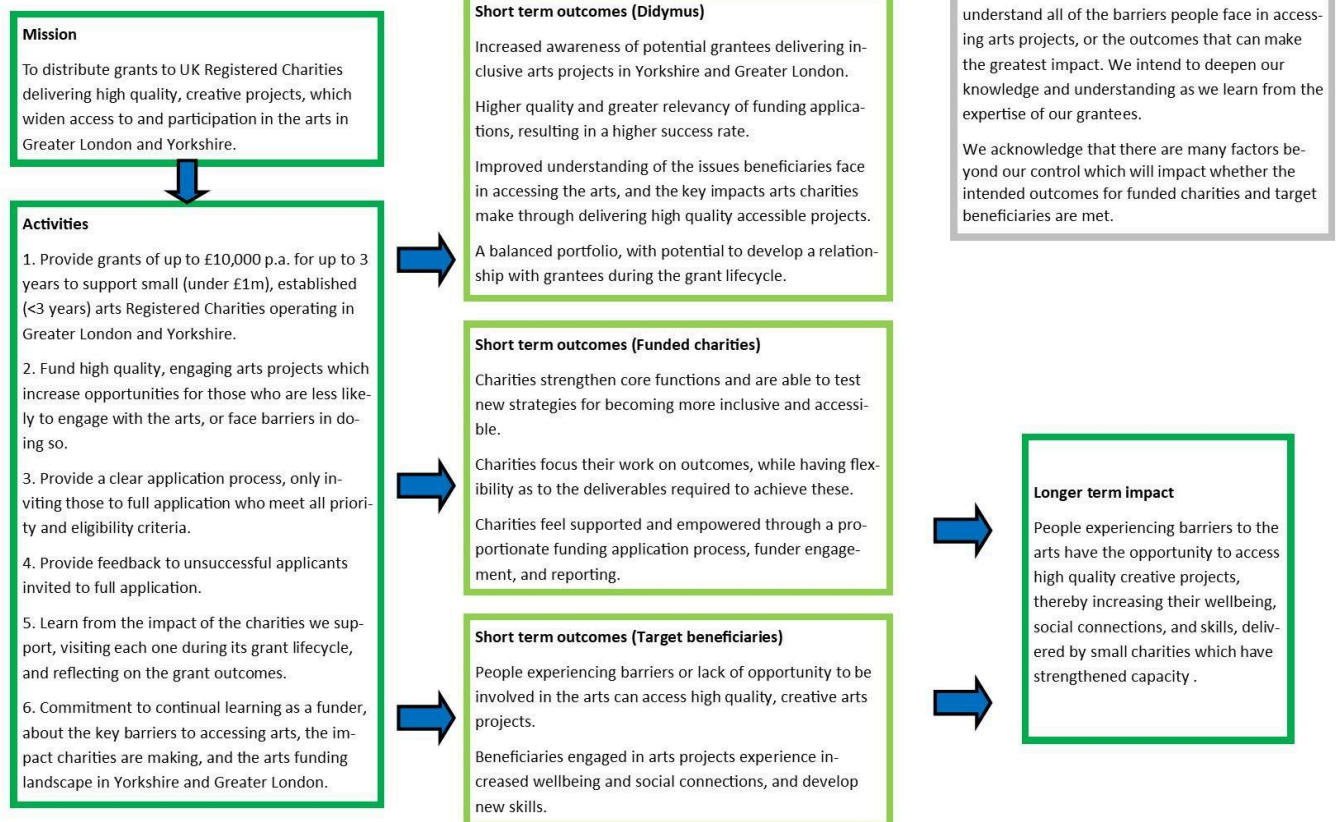
⁵ “Next Ten Year Strategy: Evidence Review”, Britain Thinks, July 2018, [ACE_10YSEvidence_Review_July18.pdf \(artscouncil.org.uk\)](#)

⁶ “How can we engage more young people in Arts and Culture?”, NPC, October 2019, [Arts-Engagement-Report-2019-web.pdf \(thinknpc.org\)](#)

⁷ “Next Ten Year Strategy: Evidence Review”, Britain Thinks, July 2018, [ACE_10YSEvidence_Review_July18.pdf \(artscouncil.org.uk\)](#)



Didymus Theory of Change



Our Funding Approach

As a small grant funder, we are typically able to make 3 or 4 grants per year, each for a 3 year period. Didymus is adopting a proactive approach to its grant making, inviting charities to apply who align with our priorities, while considering current gaps in our portfolio. In addition to proactive research, the Trustees are open to hearing from charities who feel they are a strong fit with the Trust’s priorities, and can submit an expression of interest through the website. Only a small number of expressions of interest will be invited to full application.

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria to apply for a grant from Didymus:

- A Registered Charity, with annual returns and accounts up to date with the Charity Commission.



- Annual income between £20,000 and £1 million for each of the past 3 years.
- Directly delivering arts projects with a focus on social inclusion, removing barriers to access and widening participation.
- Project work taking place in Yorkshire or in Greater London.
- An up-to-date safeguarding policy and evidence of safeguarding practice within the organisation.

We seek to fund charities who can demonstrate:

- A clear need for the project.
- Conscious widening of participation in and access to the arts.
- That they are well placed to deliver their project and have a track record of working in the arts.
- Effective use of resources, including people and finances.
- Projects planned with a focus on the difference they will make.
- Clear objectives and evaluation strategies which inform future planning.
- Robust safeguarding procedures.

Restrictions

We will not fund:

- Organisations which are not registered charities, or that are overdue in reporting to the Charity Commission
- Organisations with income of over £1 million within the past 3 years
- Organisations who have less than 2 years of returns with the Charity Commission
- Organisations with significant or recurring deficits
- Projects taking place outside of Greater London or Yorkshire
- Retrospective funding
- Unrestricted funding
- Replacement of statutory provision.



The Application Process

Didymus will invite registered charities who align with our funding priorities to submit an application. We hold Trustee meetings twice a year, after which the decision will be communicated to the applicant charity within four weeks.

Through our website, registered charities who meet our eligibility criteria can submit an expression of interest, to make the Trustees aware of their work. A small number of these will be invited to full application. Expressions of interest will typically be responded to within 4 – 6 weeks.

Successful Applications

Successful applicants will be required to comply with the terms and conditions contained in a letter from Didymus to the grant recipient and agree to be bound by them. Grantees will be required to report back on the impact the grant has made annually, and Trustees reserve the right to delay a grant payment on receipt of unsatisfactory progress reports. Failure to submit reports at the time specified by the Trustees will also jeopardise the continuation of support. The Trustees aim to visit every project at least once during the grant cycle. Any change of use for an awarded grant from that specified in the application must be approved by the Trustees. Where in Trustees' opinion, the grant has not been used for the purposes for which it was given, the grant must be repaid to the charity.

As a funder we are committed to reviewing our grant portfolio and processes against our strategy on an annual basis, to using research to identify portfolio gaps, and to continually learning from the grants we make.



Appendix

Didymus makes grants to charities delivering projects in Greater London and Yorkshire. For the purposes of our funding programmes, we define these areas as:

Greater London

- Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Camden, City of London, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston upon Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond upon Thames, Southwark, Sutton, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth, Westminster

Yorkshire

- East Riding of Yorkshire (unitary authority), North Yorkshire (combined authority), South Yorkshire (metropolitan county) and West Yorkshire (metropolitan county)