

## CultureStep Guidelines 2021/22

Funded by **Hodge Foundation** and **The Moondance Foundation**, CultureStep is designed to encourage new sponsorship and develop established business engagement with the arts. Through CultureStep, A&B Cymru invests in innovative partnerships of all kinds between the two sectors, enhancing projects and increasing their long term effectiveness.

### Priorities & Criteria

**CultureStep investment must be used to strengthen and develop the relationship between the business and arts partners.**

All projects must also benefit individuals living in Wales and address **at least one** of the following priorities:

- **Arts & Diversity:** partnering the arts to promote diversity in ethnicity, gender, physical abilities, race, religious or political beliefs and sexual orientation.
- **Arts & Employees:** encouraging partnerships that integrate the arts into employee development, while stimulating a more creative working environment.
- **Arts & the Environment:** encouraging awareness of and demonstrating commitment to environmental sustainability and regeneration through the arts.
- **Arts & Health & Wellbeing:** working with the arts to aid mental, emotional and / or physical wellbeing.
- **Arts & Kids:** engaging socially disadvantaged young people with the arts, making a tangible difference to the lives of some of the hardest to reach young people.
- **Arts & Older People:** engaging vulnerable and disadvantaged older people with the arts, making a positive difference to their lives, offering inspiration to people who are usually isolated from family, friends and / or society.
- **Arts & Tackling Poverty:** partnering the arts to improve the lives of people who do not have sufficient resources to provide an acceptable living standard which allows them to participate fully in society.

**All projects must demonstrate:**

- Clear business objectives for investing in the partnership
- The potential to develop a clear sustainable relationship between both parties
- Value for money
- The ability to manage and deliver the partnership
- Appropriate plans for crediting and evaluation

### How Much Can I Apply For?

CultureStep encourages sustainability of business investment and provides incentive for new sponsors. Arts partners may apply for up to **£1 CultureStep investment for every £2 invested by the business partner** provided the partnership is either:

- ✓ In its first year
- ✓ In its first 3 years and the business investment has remained the same each year or increased in years 2 and / or 3, or
- ✓ Has existed for more than 3 years and the business investment has increased by at least 20% in year 4

If, after 3 years, the business investment has stayed at the same level or increased by less than 20%, the maximum CultureStep investment is £1 for every £3 invested by the business partner.

The minimum business investment required is £1,000.

The minimum CultureStep investment is £500. The maximum CultureStep investment is £15,000.

## How Does It Work?

All CultureStep applicants will be assigned an A&B Cymru Manager to advise both partners on the process. Decisions are taken by the CultureStep Panel, made up of senior representatives of business and the arts and chaired by A&B Cymru's Chief Executive. Panel meeting dates and application deadlines are published on A&B Cymru's website – [www.aandbcymru.org.uk](http://www.aandbcymru.org.uk).

Once you have read these guidelines, the application process for CultureStep is as follows:

- ✓ Contact A&B Cymru to discuss your project. If eligible, A&B Cymru will e-mail you a proposal form.
- ✓ Complete the proposal form in consultation with your partner and submit to A&B Cymru by e-mail, no later than the published deadline.
- ✓ A&B Cymru will inform you of the result of your proposal within 2 working days of the Panel meeting.
- ✓ If successful, you will be sent a Schedule and Offer Letter detailing any conditions to be met before payment can be made.

Should the CultureStep investment exceed £1,000, the payment will usually be split as 70% on receipt of the signed Declaration and 30% on receipt of a satisfactory evaluation report and financial statement. Should the CultureStep investment be lower than £1,000, full payment will be made on receipt of a satisfactory evaluation report and financial statement.

Please note that A&B Cymru will review projects on a case by case basis.

The decision of the CultureStep Panel is final. There is no process for appeals.

## Programme Eligibility & Exclusions

### Restrictions on Investment

- ✓ Funds must come from the business' own funds and not a third party. If payments are split, the total will be considered in deciding the investment level. Marketing, public relations or advertising spend will be considered where it specifically supports the project.
- ✓ Projects must provide direct benefit to the business. Investment from a business' charitable trust will only be considered if the project can demonstrate real benefit to the profit making business.
- ✓ Projects that are primarily social events or parties are not eligible for investment.
- ✓ Eligible projects must identify new business money over and above any existing commercial relationship between the partners.
- ✓ Business investment can be made to the project for which you are applying or to extend and deepen a partnership that has begun within the previous 12 months. However, CultureStep cannot fund retrospectively.
- ✓ Where goods, tickets and services are being purchased for a project, A&B Cymru can only invest in their cost price. Where tickets are being funded for project participants, A&B Cymru requires a strategy that will ensure take-up and may require evidence of ticket receipts / box office data before releasing funds.

### In-Kind Investments

In-kind investment can be included within a project as an element of the business contribution. The panel will consider partnerships which involve 100% in-kind investment but such proposals must demonstrate real cost to the business.

Staff time to participate in or manage projects (except for professional services) is not eligible.

### In-Kind Investment Included

- ✓ Professional services provided to assist the project e.g. Legal or Accountancy.
- ✓ Products given or loan of goods provided to assist the project at cost price (not retail price).
- ✓ Revenue lost as a result of contributions made to the project e.g. rented spaces.
- ✓ Fit out of buildings or the provision of spaces or facilities.

## Arts Partner Restrictions

- ✓ CultureStep is open exclusively to A&B Cymru's arts members.
- ✓ Organisations should be registered charities or legally constituted as non-profit distributing. Commercial arts organisations' eligibility will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- ✓ Individual artists are eligible if they are members of relevant professional associations or able to submit the names of 2 referees. A&B Cymru may seek the recommendation of Arts Council of Wales.

## Geographic Restriction

CultureStep will only invest in arts partners based in the UK undertaking activity that directly benefits Wales.

## Programme Limits

An arts or business partner may apply to the scheme up to 3 times in one financial year for separate projects provided that the overall CultureStep investment does not exceed £15,000.

## Simultaneous Applications

No organisation can apply for A&B Cymru investment as both the arts and business partner simultaneously.

## VAT

If the recipient of CultureStep provides services that are subject to input VAT, no additional funds will be provided by A&B Cymru. When a business receives sponsorship benefits for their investment this is deemed an exchange of services and so VAT is payable by the business.

CultureStep is a grant which is not subject to output VAT.

## Validity of Offer

Unless otherwise agreed with A&B Cymru, all recipients of investment must:

- ✓ Return the signed schedule within 1 month of issue and begin the project within 6 months thereafter.
- ✓ Complete the project within 6 months of the agreed end date within a total time frame of 18 months.
- ✓ Return the evaluation and final financial reports to A&B Cymru within 3 months of project end.

Projects failing to comply with agreed timeframes will forfeit their final investments. A&B Cymru reserves the right to withdraw investments or request repayment, whole or in part.

## Investment Crediting Guidance

It is a condition of investment that all recipients undertake to publicly acknowledge CultureStep support, as well as that of the business partner(s). A&B Cymru can advise on how best to do this.

## Financial Reporting & Evaluation

All CultureStep recipients must prepare detailed evaluation and financial reports setting out how the investment was used and other information A&B Cymru may reasonably request. Guidelines will be sent to applicants with the proposal form. Funding to cover the cost of evaluation can be applied for as part of a proposal. A&B Cymru will not look favourably on organisations / individuals that have previously received an investment and have failed to produce an appropriate evaluation report.

## Recording Projects

CultureStep projects should be visually documented (e.g. photography, film etc) and shared with A&B Cymru so that a lasting legacy may be created.

## Arts & Business Cymru Awards

The lead partner from each CultureStep investment is expected to submit a nomination for the A&B Cymru Awards, provided the project is deemed successful by all parties.