Seed Funding Open Call

UK-Hong Kong Arts and Technology Partnership Development Fund 2027

UK-Hong Kong Arts and Technology Partnership Development Fund 2026/27

About the Fund

We are calling for UK and Hong Kong arts and education organisations looking to explore opportunities at the intersection of arts, culture and technology. Applications are now open and will close on **Tuesday 15 December 2026**.

Through the Fund, we are inviting UK and Hong Kong organisations to strengthen partnerships, develop new ones, test collaborative ideas, and explore opportunities at the intersection of arts, technology and higher education.

The aims are to encourage:

- knowledge exchange and international collaboration
- identification of potential research areas
- co-creation of new artistic and cultural outputs
- capacity building and skills development
- stronger partnerships between the creative, cultural, higher education and technology sectors

Through this exploratory initiative, the British Council aims to better understand emerging opportunities, strengths and interests across both regions while supporting organisations to build relationships that may contribute to future collaborative initiatives.

The Fund leads into the development of British Council's cultural showcase programme planned for 2028/29 in mainland China and Hong Kong SAR. Findings and partnerships developed through this initiative will help inform future decisions on programming.

Who can apply?

Applications must be developed jointly by at least:

- One UK-based Higher Education and/or Research Institution; and
- One Hong Kong-based Higher Education and/or Research Institution

Please note: Additional partners from Hong Kong or UK arts and cultural organisations would be highly desirable.

Examples of eligible organisations are available in **Appendix 1**.
Individuals are not eligible to apply. An organisation must be a legally registered entity with an active bank account.

Applications involving multiple partners are encouraged.

Individuals are not eligible to apply directly.

Proposals by unregistered entities such as artist collectives or non-formal education professional networks might be considered if accompanied with evidence of a strong track record in developing and delivering projects and programmes of similar scale and nature.

What type of projects will the Fund support?

Applications should align with one or more of the following themes:

- New media art
- Performing arts and new technology
- Artificial intelligence and creativity
- Creative applications of emerging technologies
- Immersive visualisation technologies (AR, VR, XR, virtual production)
- Creative media and storytelling
- Cultural heritage and digital media
- New media and creative entrepreneurship
- Technology-enabled audience engagement

We particularly welcome proposals exploring:

Creative Futures

Exploring how emerging technologies are transforming artistic practice, cultural participation, and creative industries.

Innovation and Knowledge Exchange

Building partnerships between artists, academics, researchers, cultural practitioners, and technology experts to address shared opportunities and challenges.

Digital Culture and Cultural Innovation

Creating new approaches to cultural engagement, audience development, creative production, and cultural entrepreneurship.

Education, Skills and Capacity Building

Developing talent, professional skills, and future-ready capabilities within the creative, cultural, and higher education sectors.

Greater Bay Area Connections

Exploring opportunities for international collaboration, mobility, research partnerships, and creative exchange connected to Hong Kong's position within the Greater Bay Area ecosystem.

Sustainable Partnerships

Developing models of collaboration that have long-term impact and continue beyond the grant period.

How much can I apply for?

The British Council anticipates awarding up to eight partnership development grants of up to £8,000 each.

Funding is intended to support exploratory activity, relationship-building and collaborative planning between February 2027 and December 2027.

The exact number of awards will depend on the quality of applications and available budget.

The British Council reserves the right to increase or decrease the number and value of grants awarded.

By launching this call, the British Council is not bound in any way to enter any contractual or other arrangement with you or any other potential supplier.

What does the fund cover?

Funding is intended to support activities that help partners develop collaborative ideas and assess future opportunities, examples include, but are not limited to:

- Scoping visits and partnership development meetings
- Workshops and co-creation sessions
- Knowledge exchange activities
- Professional networking events
- Pilot or proof-of-concept activities
- Collaborative planning and feasibility studies

- Artist, academic and practitioner exchanges
- Exploratory audience or market research
- Partnership building activities involving higher education, cultural and technology organisations
- Work in progress showcase

***Cross-disciplinary proposals involving arts, technology, education, science, design, engineering, social innovation, or entrepreneurship are strongly encouraged.**

Delivery

Successful projects should be delivered collaboratively by UK and Hong Kong partners.

Projects may be delivered through:

- In-person activities
- Online activities
- Hybrid delivery models

Activities may take place in:

- Hong Kong
- The United Kingdom
- The Greater Bay Area
- Online

The anticipated project delivery period is:

February – December 2027

A progress report is required to be submitted by 30 September 2027. All funded activities and the final report submission must be completed by **31 March 2028**.

Communications

Successful applicants will acknowledge support from the British Council in relevant communications and outputs.

Any future association with British Council's cultural showcase programme planned for 2028/29 would be subject to separate discussions and agreements.

Costing

The grant can cover project costs including:

- Staff costs directly related to project delivery
- Artist and practitioner fees
- Research costs
- Professional consultancy fees
- Production costs
- Technical development costs
- Equipment hire
- Software licences
- Workshop and training costs
- Venue hire
- Marketing and communications
- Translation and interpretation
- Travel and accommodation
- Evaluation and reporting

Applicants are expected to pay artists, academics, cultural practitioners, researchers, and other professionals fairly.

Ineligible costs:

Funding cannot be used for:

- Retrospective funding
- General organisational operating costs
- Capital expenditure unrelated to project delivery
- Building construction or refurbishment
- Political activities
- Fundraising activities
- Activities that have already commenced before grant approval

Please note:

- Applicants will need to make their own travel, visa, and insurance arrangements.

- Artists, creatives and professionals should be paid fairly, and this should be reflected in the project budget plan.
- We welcome in-kind contribution that is not human resource, i.e., any staff and professionals involved in project delivery should be paid fairly.

Selection criteria

Your project proposal will be assessed across the three following areas, which are also clearly marked in the application form to help you prepare your proposal.

Aim, activity, and viability: 40%

Does the project proposal support the aim of the Fund in strengthening UK engagement with Hong Kong HEIs and arts & culture organisations? Is it of a high quality and achievable?

- Evidence of developed discussions between UK and Hong Kong partners
- Evidence of focus on the thematic areas and supporting the aim of the Fund
- Evidence of viability of project: achievable objective(s), clear activity outline and expected result(s), feasible timescale and budget plan, demonstrable ability of partners to deliver, and proven track records

Partnership, contribution, and legacy: 30%

Does the project support UK and Hong Kong organisations to strengthen and further develop their partnership? Does it deliver benefit to individuals both from the UK and in Hong Kong?

- Evidence of sound partnership
- Evidence of knowledge exchange between two regions
- Evidence of benefit to individual artists, creatives, academics, researchers and education professionals and practitioners from the UK and in Hong Kong
- Evidence of how the partnership will be sustained and developed beyond the proposed project.

Innovation, diversity, and sustainability: 30%

Does your project approach encourage new and creative ways of doing things? Does it address equality, diversity, inclusion, and environmental sustainability?

- Evidence of innovation
- Evidence of consideration to equality, diversity, and inclusion issues as well as measures and standards to address these issues in proposed activities

- Evidence of consideration to environmental issues as well as measures and standards to address these issues in proposed activities

The selection of proposals for award of grant funding will also take into consideration the need to ensure wide range of projects across the arts, creative industries, education, and innovation, as well as representation from across the UK's regions and nations and Hong Kong.

How to apply

All applications much be submitted via the online application form **here** by **15.12.2026**.

Timeline

Tentative dates and key milestones

Date	Milestones
2.11.2026	Launch of Open Call for applications
2.11.2026 – 15.12.2026	Enquiries via email to arts@britishcouncil.org.hk
15.12.2026	Deadline for submission
16.12.2026 – 11.01.2027	Short-listing and requests for clarification
22.01.2027	Announcement of selection
31.01.2027	Grant contract offered
01.02.2027 – 31.12.2027	Briefing and delivery
01.01.2028 – 31.03.2028	Report and debriefing

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We particularly invite proposals with focus on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, inclusion, ageing and other areas of diversity.

FAQ

This section will be frequently updated with answers to questions/inquiries we receive.

1. How much money is available?

The British Council anticipates awarding up to eight partnership development grants of up to £8,000 each.

2. How much can I apply for?

Up to £8,000

More details are provided under the Number and value of grants section.

3. When is the deadline for applications?

15.12.2026

4. What is the timeline for project activities to take place if awarded with funding?

Activities should take place between **February – December 2027.**

5. Can I develop a project proposal with activities across multiple sectors?

Yes. We welcome proposals for cross-sectoral projects (i.e., Education Programme crossing with Arts and Creative Industries). We would advise you to consider the selection criteria carefully, particularly in outlining the linkages between sectors to demonstrate that your project proposal is of a high quality and achievable.

6. Can I apply as an individual?

Applications can only be accepted from organisations and not individuals. However, projects awarded with grant funding are expected to deliver benefit to individual artists, creatives, academics and researchers, and practitioners, both from the UK and Hong Kong.

7. Can I apply without a partner?

As the grant programme is designed to foster UK – Hong Kong partnerships, all applications must include at least one partner based in the UK, and one partner based in Hong Kong.

8. Who will assess the applications?

Applications will be assessed by a team of British Council programme managers from Arts & Creative Industries and Education. All applications will be treated confidentially.

9. When will I expect to hear if I was successful?

We anticipate selection process will be completed, and applicants informed by 22.1.2027.

10. Can I get feedback if my application is not successful?

Unfortunately, due to the volume of applications we receive, we are unable to provide feedback to all applicants. We will provide feedback to any shortlisted candidates that did not go on to receive a grant.

Appendix 1 - Examples of eligible organisations

Examples of Higher Education and Research Institutions

- Universities
- Research centres
- Academic departments
- Innovation hubs
- Knowledge transfer offices

Examples of Arts and Cultural Organisations

- Museums
- Galleries
- Arts centres
- Performing arts organisations
- Cultural institutions
- Independent cultural organisations

Creative Industry Organisations

- Design studios
- Creative agencies
- Digital media organisations
- Creative technology companies
- Creative start-ups
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Other Eligible Organisations

- Non-profit organisations
- Foundations
- Social enterprises
- Professional associations
- Cultural networks