

Government announces funding for culture sector – including freelancers

The Scottish Government has announced a £21 million support package to support cultural and events organisations and freelancers experiencing cancellations due to the rapid spread of the new Omicron variant has been announced.

This is to help manage the significant impact of the new guidelines around social distancing and the limitations on the number of people who can attend events.

The £21 million is part of the £100 million package announced by the Scottish Government last week to compensate businesses affected by events cancellations and includes an additional £1 million from existing events sector funds.

The funds will be allocated as follows:

- £10.2 million for cultural organisations and venues to be administered by Creative Scotland
- £2.8 million towards the wider events supply chain to be administered by EventScotland.
- £8 million for the Cancellation Fund for Creative Freelancers to be administered by Creative Scotland.

Creative freelancers can apply for between £500 and £2,000 from the cancellation fund which opens at 2pm on Thursday, 6 January 2022.

Details on who is eligible for the fund and how to apply will be available on Creative Scotland's website this afternoon.

More information and guidelines on the other funds administered by Creative Scotland and EventScotland will be published in early January.

Culture Secretary Angus Robertson said: "Culture and events continue to be among the sectors hardest hit by COVID-19 as the emergence of a new variant is once again causing disruption and uncertainty. The steps we're asking the public to take to minimise the spread of the virus are having a severe financial impact on the sector at a time when they were just beginning to recover from previous waves of the coronavirus.

"In the past few weeks, both myself and Culture Minister Jenny Gilruth have been speaking to freelancers and representatives from culture and events organisations to ensure they get immediate support to meet their needs.

"This £21 million in additional funding is vital to support culture and events organisations and protect the livelihoods of the people who work in the sector."

Iain Munro, CEO, Creative Scotland said: "This additional emergency funding for Scotland's culture sector is very welcome.

"This afternoon, we'll publish guidance about the first tranche for creative freelancers who're experiencing immediate financial hardship due to the loss of income because of cancellations and deferrals caused by the pandemic. Applications will open on Thursday 6 January, and will be followed by further details of how and when to apply

for the emergency support for organisations.

“The Covid-19 rollercoaster seems never ending but we will work hard with the sector to pull together again and overcome the challenges that this new wave of the pandemic presents to ensure we are able to gather in cultural spaces to enjoy Scotland’s rich, diverse and world-renowned art and creativity, and to celebrate all that they bring to our lives, in so many different ways.”