



Application Guidance - Creative and Social Futures Fund 2026-27

ABOUT THE FUND

The Creative and Social Futures Fund is a joint innovation fund to support early-stage projects in Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences that have entrepreneurial and impact potential, providing an opportunity to extend the reach and impact of research.

The programme is offered in partnership by the University of Glasgow (UofG), the Glasgow School of Art (GSA), The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS), and Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), and it is seen as an important route for Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences entrepreneurship.

We welcome proposals from projects that are at an early stage of development and embrace innovation and entrepreneurship in the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences.

The fund can provide up to £10,000 per project for a maximum of 6 months, with project delivery commencing 5th January 2027 and project end date no later than 5th July 2027.

Funding and training is provided to support awardees to develop their concepts, identify potential impact, have conversations with external stakeholders such as customers and partners, and develop networks.

Applications for the fund open on 31st August 2026, with an application closing deadline date of 12th October 2026 at midday.

KEY OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS

The key goals of the Creative and Social Futures Fund are to:

- Support development: support the development of early-stage projects in the arts and humanities that are seeking to deliver sustainable impact at scale via potential commercial opportunities. This can be done through potential new ventures*, licensing opportunities, or other commercial possibilities that support creative, community, policy, economic, social, or technological impact.
- Promote collaboration: extend collaborative activity between UofG, GSA, RCS and GCU, and develop innovative ways of working in partnership on projects with an entrepreneurial outlook.

** Venture here is defined as a company backed by the academic institution and underpinned by academic research or academic expertise*



APPLICATION FORMS, DEADLINES AND PROCESS

It's strongly recommended to contact a member of the Creative and Social Futures Fund team for advice and guidance well in advance of submission. Completed forms should be emailed no later than 12th October 2026 at midday to the following offices:

- University of Glasgow: Paige Mccaleb innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: Deborah Keogh D.Keogh@rcs.ac.uk
- Glasgow School of Art: Nicola Duncan n.duncan@gsa.ac.uk
- Glasgow Caledonian University: Susan Armstrong innovationexchange@gcu.ac.uk

Please do note the following points when writing up your proposals:

This fund is competitive, so do seek advice from the representative at your institution's innovation office (email address above) at the earliest moment to maximise your chances of success.

Projects are expected to begin promptly when funds are awarded and must be completed within the six-month delivery period, with a project end date deadline of 5th July 2027.

Do be careful when considering your budget; refer to the eligible costs and seek guidance from your institution's innovation office.

We welcome applications from Research Assistants, Research Associates, Research Fellows, LTS and Research-only colleagues. However, individuals in these roles should discuss this with PIs and ensure they have permission from their Head of School.

Projects that engage in cross-institutional partnerships with RCS, GSA, GCU and UofG are greatly encouraged.

DATES AND DURATION

Creative and Social Futures Fund projects must specify a proposed start date and project duration, and extensions to this period are not available. If you have any concerns, please contact your respective institutional office:

- University of Glasgow: Paige Mccaleb innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: Deborah Keogh D.Keogh@rcs.ac.uk
- Glasgow School of Art: Nicola Duncan n.duncan@gsa.ac.uk
- Glasgow Caledonian University: Susan Armstrong innovationexchange@gcu.ac.uk

All projects funded in this round must be completed within 6 months in all cases. All funding must be spent and project activities completed by 5th July 2027.

ELIGIBLE COSTS

The Creative and Social Futures Fund will provide up to £10,000 per project, depending on the stage of the project and the activities that are being undertaken.

The funding may be used to pay for the direct costs of developing the scope of an idea, concept or opportunity; undertaking a proof-of-concept study; research to develop the business proposition including validation of interest from stakeholder; and/ or external research associated with developing the project.

Please note that the fund cannot be used for academic research, the development of tools exclusively for use in further research; Pl salary costs; or PhD costs associated with studentships.

Please contact the below offices for further advice on eligibility, suggested activities, and financial costing:

- University of Glasgow: Paige Mccaleb innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk
- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: Deborah Keogh D.Keogh@rcs.ac.uk
- Glasgow School of Art: Nicola Duncan n.duncan@gsa.ac.uk
- Glasgow Caledonian University: Susan Armstrong innovationexchange@gcu.ac.uk

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

Applicants should write their proposal for a non-specialist audience and avoid using discipline-specific terminology and acronyms.

Applications will be processed in two stages:

- Stage 1: The applicant's institution will carry out an initial review of the proposed project to determine its eligibility for the fund.
- Stage 2: Applications deemed eligible by the applicant's institution will subsequently be reviewed by a panel consisting of the fund partners and external experts.

Factors that will be considered by reviewers:

- Appropriateness of the project's scope
- Innovative or experimental approaches to either collaboration between the institutions, and/or arts and humanities and social sciences projects in an entrepreneurial context
- Degree of clarity on how funding will be used
- The quality of the case made particularly how the research context and opportunity are outlined in line with the entrepreneurial theme of the fund



- Evidencing of the relevance of the contextual research or any research base the project draws upon
- The appropriateness of the project's activities and their relationship to any proposed outcomes
- The realism of the project plan
- The financial risk of the project and any potential de-risking already outlined
- Consideration of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles

Creative and Social Futures Fund Priorities:

- Engagement with an entrepreneurial outlook, even at the early stages, for example being willing to have discussions with potential users and customers and giving consideration to potential ways of de-risking the project.
- A focus on partnerships, especially those involving co-creation and collaboration between the Glasgow School of Art, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and the University of Glasgow

POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Workshops

Successful applicants will be required to participate in four development workshops during the project delivery period. These workshops will provide critical venture development opportunities, skill development and cohort & network building for programme participants.

Reporting

Depending on the requirements of the respective institutions, successful applicants may be -

- Invited to a 1-2-1 update meeting at the midway point of project delivery phase.
- Required to submit a succinct report detailing expenditure and project outcomes by July 30, 2027.
- Receive contact once a year from the Creative and Social Futures Fund team to hear how your project is progressing, the impact the funding has had and any key developments that are relevant to share.

APPENDIX: TERMS AND CONDITIONS (University of Glasgow)

Clauses:

- Principal Investigators must be the main budget holder for project funds at the University of Glasgow and are fully responsible for all project reporting and leading the delivery of project activities.
- Principal Investigators are responsible for compliance with award conditions and ensuring any collaborators meet conditions.
- PhD students are eligible if they have a Principal Investigator (UofG staff member) as budget holder to provide support. Discussions will take place with the IP&C team and Enterprise programmes team to ensure there is clarity on the assignation of intellectual property rights arising from their supported project.
- Further, should students' fees or stipend be paid for by a third party, students must obtain approval from that third party to participate. Please provide evidence of approval at application stage.
- Acceptance of the funding award letter constitutes acceptance of these Terms and Conditions.
- All awards must acknowledge their funding support in all publications, press releases and other communications materials as follows: funded by the University of Glasgow's Creative and Social Futures Fund.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to ensure that all proposed activities are in accordance with the University's [ethical guidance](#) and [Code of Practice for Research](#). All projects must ensure appropriate [project risk assessment](#) have been completed before beginning any funded activity (including where activity is not being completed by UofG staff or students). Applicants must apply best practice in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion according to [University policies](#), please also refer to courses housed on the Equality and Diversity Unit's Moodle portal.
- The University of Glasgow is committed to take proactive measures to address the climate crisis, please consider [sustainability goals](#) when planning and performing project activities.
- All applications selected for funding are additionally subject to all other research assurance processes at the University of Glasgow, including due diligence checks, purchasing and procurement guidelines, and ethical approval.
- A privacy notice on how The University of Glasgow will process your personal data in relation to your application can be found on the [webpage](#).
- It is a requirement that the applicant(s) gain approval for any internal costs associated with their application prior to submitting their application and for project related time commitments from their line manager or academic supervisor.



- No additional funds will be made available to projects that exceed their budget, including those associated with unforeseen VAT charges. Please note that almost all external services including consultancy are subject to VAT. Please include VAT costs in the costings of your application. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their requested budgets are sufficient for all project-related costs.
- All project budgets must be fully spent by 5th July 2027. We will not be able to extend project spend beyond this date and any expenditure incurred after that date will not be eligible for reimbursement. Any underspend cannot be allocated to other University projects.
- Successful applicants will be asked to report on their progress, by way of a short 1-2-1 mid-term meeting, and submission of a final report. Deadline for reporting is 30th July 2027 (e.g. interim/final report).
- In exceptional circumstances an extension to project reporting can be considered at the Universities discretion. Please contact the innovation & Enterprise team directly: innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk
- Written approval is required for changes to award objectives, milestones, budget reallocations or project personnel. Please contact the innovation & Enterprise team directly: innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk. Successful applicants should immediately begin preparing any necessary subcontracts, hiring processes and budget set-up upon award (please DO NOT underestimate how long these processes might take). There will be no possibility of extensions.
- Procurement/Contracts: subcontracts such as consultancy agreements are required for all external services and partnerships. Applicants are responsible for ensuring contracts are in place before starting any work. Please familiarise yourself with procurement rules at [University of Glasgow - MyGlasgow - Procurement Office](#) and contact finance-procurementhelpline@glasgow.ac.uk or your local procurement transaction hub after funding has been awarded for help. Please send a copy of all signed subcontracts to innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk.
- Pls should be directly engaged with the IP&C team to ensure appropriate support for their commercialisation activities including identification and protection of IP, and prior to commencing commercialisation activities. In line with the University of Glasgow's IP policy, successful applicants must follow reasonable procedures for the identification, protection, management and commercialisation of IP including appropriate dialogue with the IP&C team. All results arising from the funded project including all intellectual property will be the exclusive property of the University of Glasgow.
- Decisions on funding award are final and not subject to appeal.
- Termination of funding: There may be circumstance in which your funding is terminated. This includes misconduct, non-compliance, inactivity, or any identified financial irregularities. The University will let you know if this is the case and consider any reasonable representations you may have before a decision is taken.



- It is a condition of the grant of award that the University has the right, but not the obligation, to publicise the award including your participation in the award. The University may do this at the time the award is announced, at any time during the period of the project and after you cease work on this. The legal basis for this under Data Protection laws is legitimate interests.
- The University wishes you every success in the Project. If for some reason you are finding it difficult to meet any of these conditions, you are encouraged to contact innovationandenterprise@glasgow.ac.uk so that the University can consider how best to support you.

APPENDIX: TERMS AND CONDITIONS (Partner Institutions)

For applicants from partner institutions, please contact the below offices for the Terms and Conditions specific to your institution:

- Royal Conservatoire of Scotland: Deborah Keogh D.Keogh@rcs.ac.uk
- Glasgow School of Art: Nicola Duncan n.duncan@gsa.ac.uk
- Glasgow Caledonian University: Susan Armstrong innovationexchange@gcu.ac.uk