**The Mighty Creatives: Network Grants**

The Mighty Creatives (TMC) invite schools and arts organisations to apply for a grant of **up to £1000** to support networking and collaborative working for schools in your area. The grant is available for all schools in the East Midlands region.

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented schools with unprecedented challenges and demands over the last 18 months but it has become clear that working collaboratively and sharing best practice has helped lessen the pressures across schools. This is where our Network Grants can support you.

The purpose of these grants is to enable teachers to come together from different schools to further their skills and confidence in the delivery of arts and cultural provision and share best practice in these everchanging times.

This might be an opportunity for your schools to work collaboratively to:-

* **Develop staff skills**, knowledge and confidence.
* Develop **subject leadership** and policies.
* Share **practical solutions** to common challenges.
* Support **curriculum planning and development** to increase creative teaching and learning opportunities.
* Support and develop positive **mental health, wellbeing and resilience** in children, young people and staff.
* Discuss and explore **equality and diversity** within your schools and curriculum.

**What can the grant be used for?**

The grant can be used to cover a variety of start-up costs for the launch of a network, or towards a new activity within an already established network of schools. This can include the following:

* To cover the costs of local artists or workshop facilitators leading CPD opportunities as part of the network programme.
* To cover costs of recruiting speakers to share knowledge and expertise as part of the network programme.
* To produce a resource or number of resources (documents, videos, toolkits etc.) to share amongst your network.
* Venue hire and catering costs (if organising face-to-face activity)

Applicants must be able to commit to reaching and evidencing reach with **at least 10 schools** through the proposed activity.

Network activity (including dates) must be confirmed by 1st December 2021 and **delivered by the end of February 2022**. For monitoring purposes, all events must be featured on, and bookings taken through, the TMC website. Attendance at the events must also be logged using a TMC sign-in process.

We are particularly interested in applications from schools who wish to utilise this grant to launch a network that can be **sustained beyond the funded activity** and applications that wish to work with local artists and creative practitioners too. If you’re looking for partners in your area, please contact Hazel Townsend (artsmark@themightycreatives.com) who will be able to signpost you.

Previous recipients have used the Network Grants in the following ways:-

* To deliver a series of workshops looking at the planning and progression of Art and Design skills across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, working with an education consultant and visual artist.
* Delivery of a networking event with a keynote from a prize-winning author and poet that explored creative writing across the curriculum.
* Providing CPD across art forms (visual arts, dance, drama etc) for a local group of schools delivered by local artists and creative practitioners.

**Who can apply?**

This offer is open to schools or other organisations in the East Midlands who:

* Can bring together a group of local teachers **(a minimum of 10)** from different schools interested in developing cultural provision across their network.
* Have support from their Senior Leadership Team and capacity to organise and oversee the delivery of the activity. Details must be confirmed by 1st December 2021 for delivery by the end of February 2022.
* Are happy to provide 15-minutes within the networking session for a TMC Consultant to talk to the group about the work of TMC, and in particular Artsmark and Arts Award.
* Applicant lead schools must be a member of our **Creative Schools Network.** Not a member? You can sign up for [**free here.**](https://themightycreatives.com/what-we-do/programmes/creative-schools-networks/)
* Can demonstrate how the event will support longer-term networking activity e.g. opening discussion around areas such as pooling resources for ongoing CPD, as evidence of need for another funding body, as an initial launch for on-going skills sharing events, or the intention to continue with a digital network post-event.
* Please be aware we are particularly interested in supporting schools and smaller arts organisations to develop opportunities to bring together new networks of schools. We are therefore unlikely to support applications from organisations that have previously received funding from TMC or ACE to develop work of this nature.
* Applications are welcome from schools and organisations throughout the East Midlands but are particularly sought from DfE Category 5 and 6 Local Area Districts (listed in FAQs below).

**Key Timeline and Milestones**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **September and early October** | Pre-application conversations. |
| **10am Monday 11th October 2021** | Deadline for Network Grant Applications. |
| **Monday 18th October 2021** | Applicants informed of outcome. |
| **Wednesday 1st December 2021** | Details of all networking activity confirmed and included on TMC website.  First grant payment (75% total grant) |
| **End of February 2022** | All networking activity completed. |
| **Friday 18th March 2022** | Submit final report on impact and future plans.  Second grant payment (25% total grant) |

**FAQs**

**Can the money be used to support an existing network?**

These grants are intended to help facilitate the development of new networking opportunities for local schools. However existing networks are welcome to apply providing they can evidence how the money will be used to support new activity that would otherwise not be possible. Examples may include: to launch a dedicated arts-subject network within an existing MAT or employing a local artist to run a CPD session for schools who already hold regular skills-sharing opportunities.

**My network is very large, can I apply for more than £1000?**

£1000 is the maximum amount that can be applied for, and we encourage applicants to only apply for the specific amount they need. In order to support as many applications as possible, it is unlikely that many awards of £1000 will be made unless there is demonstrable need for the full allocation of funding.

**Can I use this funding for training within a single school?**

No. These grants are being offered to help develop connectivity and support across a number of different schools.

**I’m an arts organisation working with schools, can I still apply?**

Applications are welcome from both schools and arts organisations, provided they are well connected with local schools, that the activity is led by the needs of those schools and the event will benefit teachers and schools (reaching at least 10 schools).

**I am an individual working in schools, can I still apply?**

We cannot accept applications from individuals; however, we would encourage you to work with a local school or arts organisation to submit an application in partnership.

**Can the grant be used to purchase resources for my network?**

Money can only be used in the support of networking activity itself and cannot be used for the purchase of resources. However, we would encourage applicants to use this as an opportunity to evidence need and interest for a larger bid to another funding body. All applicants are welcome to join our free [Funding Support Programme](https://themightycreatives.com/what-we-do/programmes/funding-support-programme/#:~:text=our%20funding%20support%20programme&text=The%20Mighty%20Creatives%20is%20committed,to%20thrive%20in%20young%20lives.&text=Access%20to%20our%20programme%20of%20free%20and%20reduced%2Drate%20funding%20workshops) to access ongoing support in this area.

**What arts activities can the network event focus on?**

We are interested in supporting the development of arts and cultural activity in schools in the broadest sense. To that end, a variety of cultural topics can be explored through the network, including but not limited to: dance, drama, music, visual arts, literature, media and animation, heritage, textiles, technology and design. We are also interested in cross-curricular subjects whereby the arts are intrinsic in supporting wider development or attainment for example: using arts to support core subjects, arts and wellbeing, or arts and inclusive practice.

**How many schools need to attend my networking event?**

Each networking event much reach a **minimum of 10 schools**, however applications for events that will reach a larger number of schools are particularly welcome. It is important to demonstrate in your application evidence of need and interest from local schools to run the networking event, and the release of grant funding will be subject to attendance on the day.

**Where are the DfE Category 5 and category 6 Local Area Districts?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **District Name** | **Upper-tier Local Authority** | **Category** |
| Derby | Derby | 6 |
| Amber Valley | Derbyshire | 6 |
| Bolsover | Derbyshire | 6 |
| Chesterfield | Derbyshire | 6 |
| Erewash | Derbyshire | 6 |
| High Peak | Derbyshire | 6 |
| North East Derbyshire | Derbyshire | 6 |
| South Derbyshire | Derbyshire | 6 |
| South Holland | Lincolnshire | 6 |
| Corby | Northamptonshire | 6 |
| Daventry | Northamptonshire | 6 |
| East Northamptonshire | Northamptonshire | 6 |
| Kettering | Northamptonshire | 6 |
| Northampton | Northamptonshire | 6 |
| Wellingborough | Northamptonshire | 6 |
| Nottingham | Nottingham | 6 |
| Leicester | Leicester | 5 |
| East Lindsey | Lincolnshire | 5 |
| Lincoln | Lincolnshire | 5 |
| Ashfield | Nottinghamshire | 5 |
| Broxtowe | Nottinghamshire | 5 |
| Mansfield | Nottinghamshire | 5 |
| Newark and Sherwood | Nottinghamshire | 5 |

**Can I use this grant to fund a networking session within a larger event, for example a break-out within a conference?**

Due to the monitoring requirements of this funding, we cannot support activity that forms part of a large-scale event. However, it may be possible for TMC to provide alternative support at your conference or similar event. Please contact us directly to find out more.

**Can the grant be used to help our network work together to achieve Artsmark?**

Grants cannot be used to support networking activity exclusive to the Artsmark journey. We have a number of ways to support groups of schools wishing to work together to achieve Artsmark, including our [Group School Offer programme](https://themightycreatives.com/launching-our-group-school-offer-2021-2022-round-2-2500-bursaries-for-schools/). If you are interested in support of this kind, please contact [artsmark@themightycreatives.com](mailto:artsmark@themightycreatives.com)

**Why do we need to use The Mighty Creatives’ sign-in forms?**

As well as through the event bookings, the sign-in form provide us with an accurate number of those who attended the event. They also allow us to get specific permissions from delegates on whether we can continue to contact them as well as identify what programme areas delegates would like to engage with. As a lot of work is happening remotely, these may be gathered using a SurveyMonkey/Microsoft form rather than a sign-in sheet.

**What do I do next?**

If you’re interested in this offer, please get in touch for some pre-application support; contact us directly: [artsmark@themightycreatives.com](mailto:artsmark@themightycreatives.com) or by phone 07725 660 525. We advise you to look at the application questions before we arrange a pre-application call, so we can support any areas you are not sure about.

Please note: We have another fund open at the moment – the [**Group School Offer**](https://themightycreatives.com/launching-our-group-school-offer-2021-2022-round-2-2500-bursaries-for-schools/), aimed at supporting networks of schools to develop more strategic connections and encouraging greater collaboration. We can let you know about this and advise if this fund would be more relevant in the pre-application conversation.

Following which you will be eligible to apply using the application form link below.

The Mighty Creatives will let you know the outcome of your application by email by Friday 15th October 2021.

**The deadline for applications is 10am on Monday 11th October 2021.**

**You will need to apply using our online application form** [**here**](https://themightycreatives.com/networking-grant-application-form/) **but we have listed the application questions below for reference.**

**Network Grants Application Questions (for reference)**

**You will first be asked for some basic contact information including:-**

* Name
* Email
* Phone Number
* Name of school/organisation
* Address of school/organisation

**Application questions**

1. Please provide an outline of your proposed networking activity. Where possible, please indicate provisional date and timings as well as content.
2. How many schools do you intend to reach through your networking and collaborative working activity? Please describe your relationship with these schools and include details of geographical location and name any schools that have already confirmed they are interested in attending.
3. Please provide evidence of need and interest in the proposed networking and collaborative working activity, and details of how you intend to recruit to the event to ensure the widest possible reach. We cannot support events that have been planned without full consultation and agreement from local schools.
4. How will this event support on-going networking and collaborative working for schools in the future?
5. How much money are you applying for? Please provide a detailed breakdown of how you intend to use the grant, including any other sources of funding or support in-kind.
6. You will be asked to confirm you are happy:

* For a TMC Consultant to be part of the networking and collaborative working activity and will allocate time for them to talk to schools about the work of TMC.
* For the networking event to be featured on the TMC website.
* For bookings for your event to be taken through the TMC website.
* To use the TMC sign-in sheet to log attendance at your event or an online alternative if more appropriate.

**If you have any question about this funding opportunity please email** [**artsmark@themightycreatives.com**](mailto:artsmark@themightycreatives.com) **or call 07725 660525.**