

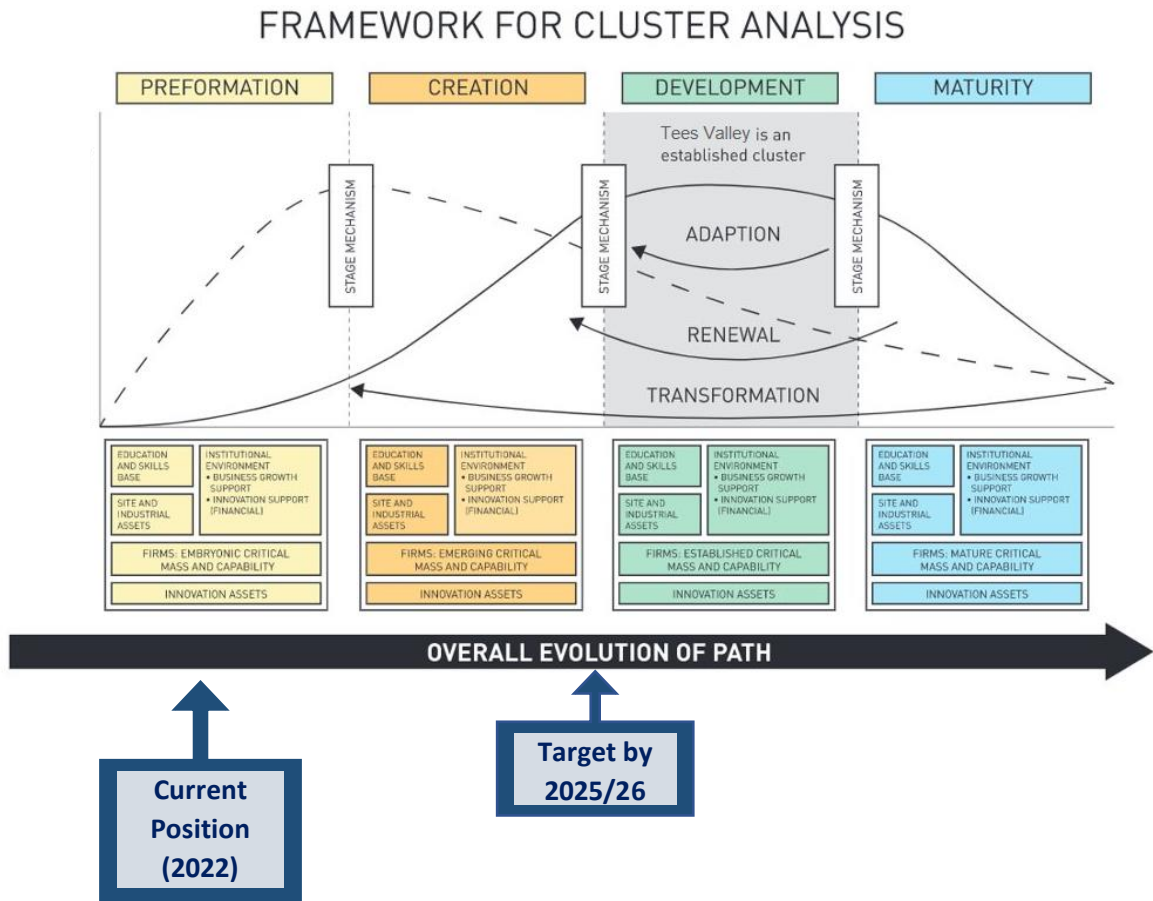
TVCA CHALLENGE FUND:

CULTURAL INDUSTRIES: NETWORK AND SECTOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Overview

Tees Valley Combined Authority’s ‘Growth Programme for the Creative & Visitor Economies’ has been designed to establish and accelerate a creative cluster in the region. It aims to galvanise a critical mass of creative talent, ideas and enterprise necessary for impactful growth of the creative economy and visible and sustainable benefits for communities and place.

[Recent analysis of Tees Valley’s creative economy and cultural & creative industries](#) has identified that Tees Valley is at a very early stage of cluster development (Preformation and Creation). TVCA will therefore invest strategically in programmes and interventions which catalyse progress. The diagram below shows the development journey that the Growth programme aims to stimulate.



THE CHALLENGE

→ To remove barriers to growth and create the conditions in which the cultural industries and creative economy can thrive, through the development and delivery of focused and targeted programmes and interventions, which:

- **Establish strong networks within and across the cultural industries; and / or**
- **Strengthen cultural industries sector skills.**

Robust and dynamic networks and skills pathways are essential, foundational components of an effective cluster. Programmes supported through this challenge fund will demonstrate the potential to make a significant contribution to moving Tees Valley's cultural and creative industries cluster from preformation to development stage.

Specifically, we are looking for proposals which **respond to the following needs / priorities:**

- **Mid-career progression and leadership development**
- **New and early career support, training, and talent pipeline development**
- **Strengthening capacity and impacts of sector leaders**
- **Support for cultural industries freelancers**
- **Governance development**
- **Sub-sector needs of: music, festivals, & visual arts**

Through this Challenge Fund, TVCA invites proposals for programmes which will:

- Connect people, skills, needs and ideas
- Facilitate and promote peer support
- Develop learning and knowledge exchange
- Are powered by partnership development and collaboration
- Respond to skills needs.

We are particularly keen to receive outcome driven proposals for interventions which will increase diversity and inclusion and which demonstrably address barriers to progression, development and access.

Whilst we recognise that not all activity can happen in all parts of the region, it is important that TVCA's investment generates region-wide benefits and has region-wide relevance. Partnership / cross-boundary working is encouraged.

Clear consideration of sustainability and legacy beyond the life of the investment will be essential.

NETWORK AND SECTOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE FUND DETAIL

Responding to sectoral needs

In 2021, consultants The Fifth Sector were engaged by TVCA to undertake research and analysis to inform a baseline review of the Tees Valley creative economy, with emphasis on the cultural industries. The report provides detailed analysis of the sector in Tees Valley in terms of size, scale, assets, investment, audiences and key characteristics.

In addition to any data / evidence of need that you may have access to through your own practice, we encourage you to read the [Tees Valley Cultural & Creative Industries: Baseline Report](#) to inform your response to this Challenge Fund.

Intended Outcomes

Investment through this Challenge Fund will contribute to achieving the following outcomes in the cultural industries sector and wider creative economy:

- Evidence of new, strengthened and visible networks within and across the cultural industries that are positively impacting the sector.
- Established / formalised practices of knowledge transfer / exchange and skills sharing have been developed and embedded.
- Identifiable, high-quality pathways for CPD and skills development are evident and being taken up.
- Evidence of new partnerships created.
- New consortium / partnership-led programmes developed and / or bids submitted to external funders.
- Accredited learning undertaken and/or evidence of impact of new skills gained.
- Proven attraction or retention of school leavers / graduates to / in the Tees Valley
- External funds have been leveraged.
- Increased representation from participants / attendees/ learners / entrants of diverse backgrounds.
- Increased innovation and new approaches to enterprise, evidence of new start-ups/new products developed, new entrants to sector are thriving.
- Evidence of improved capacity of individuals, organisations and collectives

Applicants will be required to identify **SMART objectives** (relative to the size and scale of the proposed programme) aligned to at least two of the outcomes listed above.

Investment Approach

There are **three investment pathways through which proposals can be considered**. The table below sets out the differing characteristics and expectations of each pathway.

Investment Pathways			
	1. Test & Explore	2. Mobilise	3. Scale Up
Characteristics & Expectations <i>(All applicants must have a relevant and demonstrable track record)</i>	An R&D phase to test new ideas and delivery mechanisms.	For ready-for-market projects / programmes with a proven model and clear evidence of ability to achieve successful outcomes.	For existing projects / programmes which are ready to make a significant step-change in reach and impact and which have demonstrable potential benefit for Tees Valley's cultural industries and creative economy. An existing, proven model with clear evidence of successful outcomes.
Stage of development	Evidence of need will be essential. Clear new concept i.e. a framework for testing & developing your idea. No previous / significant delivery of this concept by the applicant. Understanding of what success looks like Initial partners engaged. Costed methodology.	Completed R&D – proof of concept. Evidence of need/market demand. Clear plan for sustainability. Demonstrable potential to respond to programme objectives. Costed methodology .	Significant step-change to existing, successful model which: creates jobs, grows engagement, delivers tangible benefits (social/economic). Evidence of need/market demand. Demonstrable legacy and sustainability following completion of the programme. Demonstrable potential to respond to programme objectives. Costed methodology.
Level of investment	Negotiable, likely up to £10k.	Negotiable, likely up to £150K	Negotiable, likely up to £500K
Match required	Preferred but not required.	Yes. Maximum TVCA investment likely to not exceed 50% of total budget.	Yes. Maximum TVCA investment likely to not exceed 50% of total budget.
Programme length	Maximum 12 months long.	Maximum 36 months long.	Maximum 36 months long .

Applicants should identify **which pathway is most suited to their proposal at this stage**. Progression through the pathways may be possible throughout the lifetime of TVCA's Growth Programme for the Creative & Visitor Economies, for example: if a proposal is submitted through the Test & Explore pathway at this stage, evidence gathered could be used to submit a proposal through the 'Mobilise' pathway at a later date.

Match Funding

There is a requirement for match funding if applying to the Mobilise or Scale Up pathway.

In kind support can be used as match funding up to a maximum of 15% of total match required.

E.g., if total project cost is £100K and you are requesting £50K from TVCA Network and Sector Skills Development Challenge Fund, in kind support could form up to £7500 of the match requirement i.e., 15% of £50K.

In kind support could be activities, materials, or services that:

- are needed for the project;
- you would otherwise have to pay for; and
- don't already belong to you.

Examples include the following:

- Materials needed to undertake the project/programme
- Equipment that you would normally have to hire for a fee
- Use of a space that you would normally have to hire for a fee (for example, studio, office, meeting room, or exhibition space)
- Specialist support (for example, from a mentor, consultant, business advisor, fundraiser) provided for free or for a reduced fee. This would only be seen as appropriate if the specialist has decided that they want to offer their time as support in kind.
- Marketing and promotional support (for example, website development, printing, digital marketing)
- Filming, photography, documenting and so on
- Reduced rates

We are committed to making sure those who work in the creative industries receive proper and fair payment to reflect their professional status, skills, and experience. We therefore discourage the inclusion of freelance / unsalaried professionals' time as 'in-kind' match.

Eligible Project/Programme Costs

Investment made through this challenge fund can be used to support the following costs:

- staffing costs for project management in direct relation to this project
- training, mentoring, peer support costs / fees
- facilitation, speaker & trainer costs
- accreditation costs
- appropriate travel and subsistence expenses / bursaries, to allow the widest possible range of people to participate
- access support costs
- event costs such as venue hire, hospitality
- marketing costs, including documentation of project activities such as photography or film-making
- Research and evaluation
- planning, CRM upgrades or other relationship management systems
- design, commissioning and hosting of online or digital resources, including websites or apps to support recruitment, engagement or training
- reasonable equipment and materials costs

Who can apply?

- Businesses / organisations with a track record of delivery in culture and creative industries sector skills / talent development and/or network development and have been trading / operational for at least two years.
- A consortium of organisations / freelancers with shared skills development needs. Consortia applications must identify a lead organisation. The lead organisation will take financial and project management responsibility and report to TVCA.
- An existing network (where network is not constituted you may apply as a consortium of organisations / individuals with a lead organisation/business).
- Individuals cannot apply
- Local Authorities or HE/FE institutions or other publicly funded bodies can only apply as part of a consortia and may not be the lead organisation.
- Applicants do not need to be based in the Tees Valley to make a proposal. However, proposals from businesses and organisations outside of Tees Valley must demonstrate they will work in partnership with Tees Valley based organisations, businesses and individuals to deliver their programme and the programme must be designed to directly benefit businesses, organisations and individuals based in the Tees Valley.

Programme Design and Expectations

You will need to commit to working with and providing information and data to an external evaluator who will be conducting a longitudinal study on the effect and impact of TVCA investment.

A Creative Place Development Officer will be identified as your main contact. They will work to support you throughout your programme delivery and you will need to provide them with regular updates on progress of your project / programme commensurate with size and scale of the project / programme.

We are committed to extending the impacts of our investment and to adding value to the work of our partners by making connections with the wider resource of TVCA. We will work with you to ensure connectivity with the Marketing & Communications, Education, Employment & Skills, and Business Growth teams and ask that you commit to providing information, copy and images to facilitate promotion of the project as necessary.

TVCA and Tees Valley Creative Education Partnership are part of the RSA Region of Learning Leadership Programme. The [Region of Learning programme](#) has the potential to **transform the way creative learning and skills are recognised in Tees Valley through digital badging and the development of a place-based digital pathways app** that will help learners to reach their goals and organisations to demonstrate impact through clear measurement of engagement. We require all supported organisations to work with TVCA on this programme and you will be supported to incorporate, where appropriate, digital badging into your projects.

Timeline

Applications open: 20th June 2022

Applications close: 12pm, 25th July 2022

Applicants notified by: 12th August 2022

Application Process & Delivery Phases

Phase	Details	Timeframe
Application		
To apply to the Network Development and Sector Skills Support Challenge Fund you will need to complete an online application form. Please refer to the guidance notes to assist you.	<p>You will need to upload the following documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Forecast & Methodology/Delivery Plan Spreadsheet (<i>using template provided</i>) • Latest audited accounts (to standard required for your organisation) • One piece of additional information which may support your application, this could be a brochure, evaluation document etc. (<i>optional</i>) 	Online application form will be open from 20th June 2022 and will close at 12pm on 25 th July 2022.
Assessment		
Assessment of applications will be made via the following steps.	<p>Initial assessment of the Network Development and Sector Skills Support Challenge Fund will be undertaken by TVCA's Creative Place Team as follows:</p> <p>Eligibility: Check against criteria for TVCA Network Development and Sector Skills Support Challenge Fund to ensure the applicant is eligible to apply.</p> <p>Content assessment: If eligibility checks are completed satisfactorily, content of applications will be assessed on the ability of an applicant to clearly articulate and demonstrate evidence of need, capability, and ambition to achieve programme outcomes as listed above. This will include assessment of the activity plan and budget forecast, to consider deliverability, resourcing and value for money.</p> <p>Balancing portfolio: TVCA will also take into consideration geographical coverage, the range of sub sectors/audiences/participants targeted and</p>	<p>We will endeavor to inform applicants of the final decision by 12th August 2022.</p> <p>If applicants do not pass eligibility checks they will be notified within 5 days of the application deadline.</p>

	<p>TVCA's priorities as listed above for R1 of this programme.</p> <p>Independent Panel: Recommendations based on the findings of these assessments will then be passed for consideration by an independent assessment panel in-line with TVCA's Assurance Framework. The panel will include representatives from the independent sector, Tees Valley Local Authorities and senior TVCA officers.</p> <p>To ensure fairness and transparency, any conflicts of interest will be declared prior to convening the Panel for decision-making and affected parties will not be involved in decision-making related to those areas of conflict.</p> <p><u>TVCA reserves the right to seek further clarification from applicants, as necessary, to assist with its decision-making.</u></p> <p>Financial Due Diligence: TVCA will undertake financial due diligence checks on successful applicants before making a final decision.</p> <p>Offer: Proposals identified for progression may be subject to negotiation to ensure that TVCA is able to input into delivery plans, core objectives and outputs etc. The level of investment will be agreed in-line with these discussions. A grant offer letter and funding agreement will be issued subsequent to satisfactory completion of this process.</p>	
Funding offer letter and release of first payment		
<p>All successful applicants will receive a grant offer letter and funding agreement which will need to be signed and</p>	<p>Fund participants will receive % of grant total (to be agreed taking into consideration timing and scale of project) upon receipt of signed funding agreement.</p>	<p>Upon return of the grant offer letter, grant recipients can expect payment</p>

<p>returned to TVCA to release the first payment.</p>	<p>Remaining payments will be made in stages which align to delivery plan outputs, the length and scale of project and will be set out in the funding agreement.</p>	<p>within 5 working days.</p>
<p>Delivery, Monitoring & Evaluation</p>		
<p>Successful applicants must keep TVCA informed with progress and provide the following monitoring information to trigger staged payments.</p>	<p>Successful applicants will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be appointed a dedicated Creative Place Development Officer (CPDO) as their day-to-day contact and they must keep these officers up to date with progress on the development and delivery of their project. • Commit to participating in two round-table discussions with other successful applicants. <p>To trigger each payment stage as outlined in your funding agreement you must provide the following information and documentation. Frequency and level or detail will be proportionate to the scale and length of the project and detailed in your funding agreement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress report – progress and outcomes to date, issues affecting progress and delivery, progress expected in next period and potential risks, any proposed changes to delivery/activity plan. • Budget – update on income and expenditure to date. • Yearly report (if project is longer than one year) and/or final report which includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress against smart objectives. ○ evidence of outcomes, for example accreditation, jobs/employment created. ○ Planned / progress towards exit strategy/sustainability/legacy plan. ○ Narrative evaluation including, for example, case studies, photographs, participant quotes etc. 	<p>As per funding agreement.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evidence of defrayal and invoices and receipts for all external spend. ○ Completion of actual income and expenditure spreadsheet to confirm all external and internal expenditure against original forecast budget. ○ If project longer than 1-year audited accounts of previous year with reference to TVCA investment. 	
Project Completion		
<p>Once an applicant has completed their project and final reporting requirements, as detailed above, they can claim their final payment.</p>	<p>You must keep a record / evidence of internal costs/time spent as we may need to request this from you if this programme is externally audited.</p>	<p>As per funding agreement.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions

<p>Who can apply to this programme?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses / organisations with a track record of delivery in culture and creative industries sector skills / talent development and/or network development. • A consortium of organisations / freelancers with shared skills development needs. Consortia applications must identify a lead organisation. The lead organisation will take financial and project management responsibility and report to TVCA. • An existing network (where network is not constituted you may apply as a consortium of organisations / individuals with a lead organisation/business). • Individuals may not apply. • Local Authorities or HE/FE institutions or other publicly funded bodies can only apply as part of a consortia and may not be the lead organisation. • Applicants do not need to be based in the Tees Valley to make a proposal. However, proposals from businesses and organisations outside of Tees Valley must demonstrate they will work in partnership with Tees Valley based organisations, businesses and individuals to deliver their programme and the programme must be designed to directly benefit businesses, organisations and individuals based in the Tees Valley.
<p>I am not eligible for this programme. Is there any other support TVCA can offer?</p>	<p>If you are not eligible there may be other forms of support via Tees Valley Business. For more information click here. We would also recommend signing up here to the Creative Place Newsletter here to receive the latest news, networking events and funding opportunities from TVCA, and other regional and national bodies.</p>
<p>How can the grant funding be used?</p>	<p>Investment made through this challenge fund can be used to support the following costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staffing costs for project management / in direct relation to this project • training, mentoring, peer support costs / fees • facilitation, speaker & trainer costs • accreditation costs • appropriate travel and subsistence expenses / bursaries, to allow the widest possible range of people to participate • access support costs • event costs such as venue hire, hospitality • marketing costs, including documentation of project activities such as photography or film-making • research, evaluation • planning, CRM upgrades or other relationship management systems • design, commissioning and hosting of online or digital resources, including websites or apps to support recruitment, engagement or training

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reasonable equipment and materials costs
How much can I apply for?	<p>There are three investment pathways;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test and Explore - Likely maximum grant £10,000 Mobilise - Likely maximum grant £150,000 Scale Up - Likely maximum grant £500,000
Do I need match funding?	<p>In line with the three investment pathways there are the following match funding requirements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test and Explore - match funding preferred but not required Mobilise - it is likely that TVCA investment will not exceed 50% of total budget Scale Up – it is likely that TVCA investment will not exceed 50% of total budget
What information will I need to provide as part of financial due diligence?	<p>If your proposal passes eligibility and narrative & budget assessment, then the next step is that TVCA will undertake financial due diligence on your business/organisation and its officers. A risk assessment will then be provided to the decision makers to inform the final decision. Due diligence checks will be commensurate and dependant on size and type of organisation and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authenticating the personal identities of persons with significant control and carrying out a financial/fraud risk assessment. Carrying out a general risk assessment of the organisation using Experian and Companies House records. Carrying out a financial viability assessment of each organisation using their accounts together with Experian and Companies House records. Carrying out a reputational risk assessment of each applicant. Validating grantees’ bank accounts using Experian and/or CreditSafe. <p>This may also require additional evidence/information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of existing bank account Audited Accounts (to prove you have been trading for at least 2 years) Details of any person who has control of the business including the completion of a 'fit and proper person' declaration Subsidy control declaration (previously known as state aid). <p>Please note that if you have previously undergone financial due diligence with TVCA, we may be able to use some of the previous checks as evidence in this process.</p>
I have received TVCA funding before. Can I still apply?	<p>Yes, if you have received TVCA funding in the past, you are still eligible to apply.</p>
What if the proposed costs change? Will the amount of	<p>We do not envisage any changes to the funding agreement. However, if your plans change significantly, please notify us as soon as possible. In exceptional circumstances we may review funding arrangements however funding amount will not be able to exceed original grant offer.</p>

<p>funding I receive from TVCA change?</p>	
<p>Do I need to include VAT in my application?</p>	<p>If your business is not VAT Registered and therefore unable to reclaim VAT, then you need to include VAT as part of your costs and ensure that the costs are within the total grant ceiling of the investment level you are applying to.</p>
<p>How will my application be assessed?</p>	<p>Initial assessment of the Network Development and Sector Skills Support Challenge Fund will be undertaken by TVCA’s Creative Place Team as follows:</p> <p>Eligibility: Check against criteria for TVCA Network Development and Sector Skills Support Challenge Fund to ensure the applicant is eligible to apply.</p> <p>Content assessment: If eligibility checks are completed satisfactorily, content of applications will be assessed on the ability of an applicant to clearly articulate and demonstrate evidence of need, capability, and ambition to achieve programme outcomes as listed above, a clear activity plan on how the project will be delivered and managed.</p> <p>Balancing portfolio: TVCA will also take into consideration geographical coverage, the range of sub sectors/audiences/participants targeted and TVCAs priorities as listed above for R1 of this programme.</p> <p>Independent Panel: Recommendations based on the findings of these assessments will then be passed for consideration by an independent assessment panel in-line with TVCA’s Assurance Framework. The panel will include representatives from the independent sector, Tees Valley Local Authorities and senior TVCA officers.</p> <p>To ensure fairness and transparency, any conflicts of interest will be declared prior to convening the Panel for decision-making and affected parties will not be involved in decision-making related to those areas of conflict.</p> <p><u>TVCA reserves the right to seek further clarification from applicants, as necessary, to assist with its decision-making.</u></p> <p>Financial Due Diligence: TVCA will undertake financial due diligence checks on successful applicants before making a final decision.</p>

Where can I get help to complete the form?

We encourage you to read the Supporting Information and Application Guidance Notes. However, if you have any accessibility issues or further questions not covered in the supporting information please contact Tees Valley Business via the 24/7 helpline Tel: (01642) 939386 or email: teesvalleybusiness@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk and they will direct your enquiry to the appropriate team member.