Royal Conservatoire
of Scotland

APPLICATION GUIDANCE FOR THE ATHENAEUM AWARDS 2024-2025

Applications for the *Athenaeum Awards* will be accepted three times a year. For the 2024-25 Academic Year, applications must be submitted before the following deadlines:

- Monday 14 October 2024 at 17:00
- Wednesday 5 February 2025 at 17:00
- Wednesday 7 May 2025 at 17:00

Decisions on the applications will be made by the Research Committee, the Engagement Committee, and the Creative Health sub-committee. Applications submitted after the deadlines above will be put into the next round.

Click here to submit your application via the Athenaeum Award Application Webpage.

To complete your application please ensure you have completed or collected all of the required documents:

1. Athenaeum Award Application Form or Athenaeum Conference Presentation Application Form
2. Athenaeum Award Budget Form (if applicable)
3. Letter of Support from your Line Manager
4. Letter of Support from any external partners (if applicable)

The completed application form, budget form (if required), and letters of support must all be uploaded at the same time. Only complete applications submitted online before the deadlines will be reviewed by the Committees and considered for an Award.

Eligibility

Bids from all Full-Time and Part-Time staff of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland are welcome. The application process is competitive and subject to annual budgetary restrictions.

All staff applying should have the full support of their Head of Department or line manager. Evidence of this should be included in the statement of support submitted with the application.

Athenaeum Conference Presentation Award applications are eligible if presenting a paper, chairing/participating in a panel, or leading a discussion or workshop at a conference. If none of the above apply, you are not normally eligible for Athenaeum Award funding to attend this conference. We recommend speaking to your relevant department regarding professional development opportunities.

To ensure that your conference fits with the spirit and intention of this award, please make sure it meets one of the following criteria:

- It is rooted in the context of higher education research or knowledge exchange;
- It is linked to subject areas relevant to the arts and creative industries;
- It has the potential to extend your work or practice into wider societal impact.

If your conference presentation proposal does not fit within these areas, we are unlikely to be able to fund it.

If applying for an **Athenaeum Engagement Award** your project should include an external partner. External partners can be new or existing collaborators, and they can be individuals or organizations. However, partnerships with suppliers are not eligible for this award (e.g. manufacturers, distributors or designers). Please note that for an external partnership project to be eligible the RCS staff lead cannot have any direct involvement in the company, such as Board membership or artistic leadership.

The **Athenaeum Engagement Award** aims to enable our staff to kickstart projects with their external partners and add value to the creative arts ecosystem. As such, we're looking for our Athenaeum Engagement Awards to demonstrate some aspect of match funding from partners; this can be in cash or in kind and can include things like venues, recording studio time, or the time of your external partner (if they are an independent artist). As a guide we would expect to see at least 25% match funding towards our project costs.

Timing

The period chosen for the project should as far as possible be undertaken within 12 months of funding at the very most. In extreme circumstances where no reasonable progress can be demonstrated, funding for the *Athenaeum Award* may be withdrawn.

Costs

Staff should supply a detailed budget to cover the costs of the project they are applying for, up to £3,000 for a Research or Creative Health Award, or up to £5,000 if for an Engagement Award. Consider all the possible hidden costs that may be involved and present a realistic budget.

Types of costs that may normally be applied for and should be included:
-personnel costs directly linked to your project,
-venue hire,
-travel and accommodation,
-marketing,
-administrative costs,
-consumable costs.

If applying for partial funding of a project, please include a full project budget with indication of other funding noted. If applicable, please include in-kind costs and contributions.

If applying for an Engagement Award, please include detail on match funding from your partner, whether it be in cash or in kind. This can include things like venues, recording studio time, or the time of your external partner (if they are an independent

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artist). As a guide we are looking for a minimum of 25% match funding for Engagement Awards.

If applying for per diem daily rates, these should be in line with [RCS Employee Business Expenses Claims Policy and Procedures.](#)

Staffing costs

When applying for your costs on the project you should realistically consider the time you will need to spend making the project happen. If you are applying for time related costs, they should be based on the [institutional hourly rates](#).

Full Time members of staff cannot apply for time related costs unless they are applying for a Sabbatical Award.

Sabbaticals

If you would like to apply for a Sabbatical Award [please contact the RKE Team](#) ahead of application, and **at least six months in advance** of the proposed sabbatical. The £3,000 budget limit does not apply to sabbaticals.

Outputs and Objectives

The Committees will be looking for applications that have clear outputs and objectives. These awards are designed to result in ambitious projects with realistic and achievable outputs and objectives.

Outputs may take any form that satisfy the criteria of the award given below but will typically take the form of: performances; events, published articles; compositions; plays; short films; recordings, events, research reports, new processes, products and services.

Objectives may include new partnerships with external companies, newly established relationships with artists or institutions, grant applications or other programmes of work directly related to the subject of the project or research and any longer terms hopes for the work or partnership.

If submitting an application for a Research award, both outputs and objectives must meet high standards of significance, originality and rigour.

If submitting an application for an Engagement award, your outputs and objectives must reflect the Conservatoire's principles and ambitions for Engagement, now the third mission of the Conservatoire along with Research and Education. These applications will need to involve external partners and/or are socially/artistically meaningful and may have commercial potential (though this is not a requirement). In particular, this requires that project objectives be of direct use and interest to those beyond Higher Education in some clearly defined way. *Athenaeum Engagement Awards* will involve external partner(s) that can demonstrate a commitment to the project at the point of application and contribute some aspect of match funding, either in cash or in kind.

Assessment and criteria for award

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Below are the criteria that proposals will be assessed against depending on which type of funding is requested.

The Committees are not obliged to recommend any awards for funding if the standard of applications is not considered sufficiently high.

Criteria

a) Criteria for a Research proposal

Decisions will be made in relation to the overall merit (significance, rigour and originality), the feasibility of the project, the expertise of staff involved and its relation to the institutional strategy.

The application will be considered in relation to one or more of the following criteria:

- A clearly-defined research question;
- the identification of clearly defined outputs and objectives which must be outlined in the initial application;
- the complementarity of the proposed research to the Conservatoire's research strategy;
- the likelihood that the project will enhance the reputation of both the Conservatoire and staff;
- the demonstration of a well-planned and prepared project and, if appropriate, with partnerships in place prior to application;
- the extent to which the project is documented or recorded in a way to enable dissemination of research outputs to the widest possible audience;
- the extent to which the timeline provided in the application is achievable and appropriate to the methods in the project;
- the potential relationship of their proposed research to the Conservatoire's future REF submission;
- confirmation that that applicant intends to apply for ethical approval from the RCS Ethics Committee.

b) Criteria for an Engagement proposal

Decisions will be made based on the overall merit of the project, the feasibility of the project, demonstration of project need, clear commitment of project partner, expertise of staff involved and clear link to the RCS Strategy 2030.

A letter of support from your external partner(s) should be included with your application.

The application will be considered in relation to one or more of the following criteria:

- the extent to which the proposal demonstrates clearly defined and disseminative objectives that must be outlined in the initial application;
- the extent to which, if appropriate, the proposal demonstrates potential for socially meaningful impact in project dissemination to audiences beyond higher education;
- the extent to which, if appropriate, the proposal has artistic or social merit, commercial potential or potential to influence policy;
- the evidence that the project will demonstrate quality and enhance the reputation of both the Royal Conservatoire and staff member;

- the extent to which the application demonstrates a well-planned, prepared project with partnerships in place prior to application;
- the extent to which the proposed dissemination methods are appropriate and effective;
- the extent to which the timeline provided in the application is achievable and appropriate to the methods in the project.
- the extent to which the proposal details match funding contributed by external partners, which can be either in cash or in kind.
- confirmation that that applicant intends to apply for ethical approval from the RCS Ethics Committee, if appropriate.

c)   Criteria for a Creative Health proposal

Decisions will be made in relation to the overall merit of the project, the feasibility of the project, demonstration of project need, the expertise of staff involved and its relation to Creative Health objectives, as well as relation to the institutional strategy.

Creative Health can be defined as a belief that art and creative expression have a profound influence on people's wellbeing. It can also help to address health inequality and make for a better society.

Creative Health objectives:
- working creatively with others towards a healthier society;
- adopting sustainable practices as a creative artist/practitioner;
- raising the profile of Creative Health at the Conservatoire.

The application will be considered in relation to one or more of the following criteria:

- the identification of clearly defined outputs and objectives which must be outlined in the initial application;
- the extent to which the proposal fits with Creative Health objectives listed above;
- the extent to which, if appropriate, the proposal demonstrates potential for socially meaningful impact in project dissemination to audiences beyond higher education;
- the extent to which, if appropriate, the proposal has artistic or social merit, commercial potential or potential to influence policy;
- the evidence that the project will demonstrate quality and enhance the reputation of both the Royal Conservatoire and staff member;
- the demonstration of a well-planned and prepared project and, if appropriate, with partnerships in place prior to application;
- the extent to which the timeline provided in the application is achievable and appropriate to the methods in the project;
- confirmation that that applicant intends to apply for ethical approval from the RCS Ethics Committee, if appropriate.

d)   Criteria for a Conference Presentation proposal

Decisions will be made in relation to the overall merit (significance, rigour and originality), the feasibility of the conference participation, the expertise of staff involved and its relation to the institutional strategy.

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- the applicant demonstrates that they are either: presenting a paper, chairing or participating in a panel, leading a discussion or a workshop at a conference;
- the likelihood that the conference participation will enhance the reputation and profile of both the Conservatoire and staff member.

Please refer to the matrix below for further information on the assessment criteria employed by the Committees.

Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to:

- provide interim and final reports for all projects,
- provide final reports for conferences,
- attend a final wrap-up interview with the Knowledge Exchange Development Assistant.
- retain all receipts and attach to the final report, along with scans/images
- set up or update their PURE profile.

Templates for reporting can be found here:
Athenaeum Award report template
Athenaeum Conference Presentation Award report template

FAQ: What do the funds cover:

- Achievable projects that are already under development and need a small amount of funding for completion (i.e., performance or recording of newly written work, publications);
- To kickstart new projects with new collaborative partners, including individuals, micro companies, SMEs, arts and community organizations;
- Write-up time that allows part-time staff members the equivalent of up to 70 hours of teaching time to finish an ongoing piece of research for journal submission (full-time staff members may not apply for time-related costs);
- Funding for participation, travel and subsistence costs towards conferences or performances;
- Any other endeavor or project, including a residency, that has the potential for a research or engagement output and outcome;
- Your own time *Please note - full time staff cannot apply for time related costs – instead, discuss with line manager around using allocated time for Engagement. This does not apply to the Athenaeum Sabbatical Awards;
- Funds cannot cover: Living costs, rent, overhead bills (subsistence costs), debts, capital equipment, or membership of professional bodies.

If you have any questions, please contact Gallia Young (Knowledge Exchange Development Assistant) at g.young@rcs.ac.uk.

The Research and Engagement Committees reserve the right to accept or deny applications according to RCS Strategy.

Before submitting this application, please be aware that RCS expects you to act as leader on your project and that all responsibilities and accountabilities for its administration are devolved to you.

By submitting an application, you are agreeing to take ownership of your project.

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We take your privacy very seriously. Please find a copy of our privacy notice at:
https://www.rcs.ac.uk/policy/privacy/

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