

# Make it Happen Fund

## Information & Guidance Notes 2025-2026

[These guidelines are available in BSL. Please click here to view in BSL.](#)

## What is the Make It Happen Fund?

The purpose of the Make It Happen Fund is to give our most recent graduates access to a competitive pot of seed funding to support their career goals and enterprising ambitions. The fund supports our graduates' early-stage career development, in a range of areas such as: training, networking, testing ideas, starting up companies, staging pop-up events or digital performances, and forming new collaborations.

RCS graduates from 2023, 2024, or 2025 can apply for a fixed award of **£1,500**.

There are up to 20 awards available.

The deadline for application is: **Wednesday 24 September 2025**.

**[Click here to make an online application.](#)**

**Would you like to submit an application by video (BSL)?**  
Please email **[cedo@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:cedo@rcs.ac.uk)**

CEDO will host an **online information session** on **Wednesday 27 August from 12:30 – 13:30** which **[you can join online by clicking here](#)** (Meeting ID: 318 292 279 952 1 / Passcode: f75j6Lo7).

CEDO will also host a **drop-in application writing session** on **Wednesday 17 September from 12:00 – 14:00** at **Clockwise Glasgow (Room M2:13)**, where you can work on your application and ask clarifying questions as you work. The CEDO Manager can support you in producing budgets and provide clarity on the application process.

**Please RSVP for the application writing session** by emailing **[cedo@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:cedo@rcs.ac.uk)**.

## Who is eligible for funding?

To be eligible to apply to the Make It Happen Fund, you must be a graduate of RCS within the past three years. (i.e. you will have graduated in Spring or Autumn in 2023, 2024, or 2025). Eligible graduates include undergraduate, taught postgraduates, PhD and DPerf students.

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Applicants must reside in the United Kingdom and be able to provide RCS with proof of home address (example: utility bill or council tax bill). Those holding a Student (formerly Tier 4) visa cannot be in receipt of public funds and cannot be self-employed, therefore cannot be awarded the Make It Happen Fund.

Individuals can only be awarded funds once through this initiative.

*\*All awardees are responsible for their own tax.*

## Systemic Barriers

We are working to address systemic barriers across all of our work in CEDO and have therefore committed that at least 30% of this funding will be awarded to projects which are led by:

- people from the global majority and those from the global south
- people from working class backgrounds
- those who are neurodiverse and/or disabled people
- members of the LGBTQIA+ community
- care-experienced people
- migrants
- people who are or have been homeless
- those with lived experience of the criminal justice system
- Romany travellers
- those who face barriers to opportunities due to mental health issues, substance misuse, and unpaid caring duties

If you feel that this list is not representative of people facing systemic barriers, please let us know, so we can continue to improve our process.

On application forms, you will be asked if you identify as part of one or more of these communities (you will not be required to select which category). No proof will be required, and we expect our RCS community to be honest and only select this option on the form if it does apply to them.

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## How do I make a strong application?

We are looking for applicants to be specific about what they intend to do, and to clearly articulate the learning and development opportunities that the award will provide. It is vital that you highlight the difference that you hope this funding, and your project, will make to the next steps in your career.

Your project budget should provide an outline of all associated costs of your project (i.e. artist's fees, website costs, venue booking). Estimated costs will be accepted but should be realistic and it is expected you would undertake background research to ensure costs are reasonable.

If your project budget is more than £1,500, and the MIHF will be used in a package of funding, you need to demonstrate clearly the other sources of funding and the stage of application (i.e. awarded funding, pending application, writing application) within your budget. You should also be able to demonstrate how the project will move forward if funding is not secured from other sources (what is your Plan B?). You should also indicate all in-kind support\* secured within the budget.

[We have put together an example budget for you to reference.](#) This includes one budget for £1,500 and one for more than £1,500 which shows other funding and in-kind support\*.

*\*In-kind support is support (or an agreement) you have received which does not have a monetary contribution, but would ordinarily have a cost associated (for example, a venue is providing rehearsal space free of charge).*

Applicants can choose to upload an additional 1 page PDF in support of their written application that includes imagery/documentation/mood boards of previous work, or of your work-in-progress. You may also include hyperlinks to video or sound content. All supporting content should be submitted in PDF format.

The PDF of visual imagery is not formally assessed, but it can help panellists understand more about your practice and the proposed project.

If you wish to submit a video application in lieu of a written application, you may do so by emailing [cedo@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:cedo@rcs.ac.uk).

We recommend that you draft your application in a document before submitting it in the online form. This will allow you to edit your application beforehand to ensure it is as strong as possible.

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You must ask one person who knows you professionally to act as a referee to support your application. The referee cannot be related to you. We may contact you or your referee if we have questions about the application. Applications submitted without a referee will not be considered.

You will also be asked if you would like to receive the CEDO newsletter, to hear about more funding opportunities or other support available to you as an RCS graduate.

If you select to receive the CEDO newsletter, you will be asked to provide information on your current work circumstances. We have a compliance obligation to report on the impact of activities like the Make It Happen Fund to the Scottish and UK Governments and to HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency).

More importantly, this data is directly related to the resource that we receive from the Scottish Funding Council to continue impactful programmes like the Make It Happen Fund and other CEDO activities.

This is in line with our data privacy policy which you can find here:  
[www.rcs.ac.uk/policy/privacy](http://www.rcs.ac.uk/policy/privacy)

## Can I pay myself and my collaborators?

Within our community of artists, it is vital that you are paid fairly for your expertise and your time. Paying yourself and your collaborators fairly should be an industry standard to help ensure that everyone is able to access and create art.

We encourage you to plan your project in such a way that you can ensure that you, and any of your collaborators, are paid fairly for their time and effort. This may mean slowing your pace, splitting your project into phases, and taking care to not fit a big project into a small budget.

We strongly encourage payment of at least the [Real Living Wage](#) for yourself and for all people being paid to undertake work in your project.

You may also use your chosen union rates (i.e. Musicians Union, Equity, etc), which should be clearly identified in your project budget. If you're not sure about union rates, then you should be using the Real Living Wage as a guide.

In your project, if you are engaging with the community through research or workshops, we would also encourage you to consider carefully what offer you are making to these participants to ensure a fair transaction for their time and work.

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## What can I get funding for?

Recipients can use the fund for the following types of activities:

- Planned projects that take place after 15 November 2025
- Seed funding for early-stage ideas, performances or ventures
- To test or prototype an idea, project or collaboration through a lab week or rehearsal week, pop-up event, marketing campaign, brand development
- Performance or digital performance related costs such as venue hire and equipment or streaming platforms
- Costs associated with taking a show to Festivals or Online Festivals
- Costs related to producing collaborative projects – space hire, pop-up events, marketing materials
- To support starting up a company (e.g. set up costs, market testing, website)
- Registration costs for attendance at industry training, networking events or trade fairs that will support your career development
- Artist's fees to cover your time and expertise on the project

The fund will not cover:

- Living costs, rent, overhead bills (Subsistence costs)
- Debts
- Business Consulting costs
- New instruments
- Membership of professional bodies
- Formal tuition fees
- Projects that commence before 15 November 2025

*\*If you have any questions with regards to the use of the fund please contact [cedo@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:cedo@rcs.ac.uk).*

## Application Timeline

**The application deadline is 17:00 on Wednesday 24 September 2025.** Applications made after this time will not be accepted to the Make It Happen Fund.

Applicants should receive an automated email from our online system, Zoho, confirming the form has been received. If you have not received this email, please contact us at [cedo@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:cedo@rcs.ac.uk).

An initial check for eligibility will be completed by members of the CEDO Team.

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Applications will be assessed by a selection panel of industry practitioners, including former awardees of the Make It Happen Fund. Applicants will receive a decision on their application no later than mid-November 2025.

If your application is successful, we will require a document or official letter with your name and proof of address, dated in the last three months. For example, this could be an energy or phone bill etc. We will also need the following information to complete the payment process:

- Name & address of bank account holder
- Account number
- Sort code

Successful applicants will be provided with the official Make It Happen Fund logo and a written sentence to acknowledge the funding; we kindly ask that these materials be incorporated into all promotional and public-facing aspects of your work, in recognition of our support.

## What happens if I am unsuccessful?

We will communicate decisions to applicants by mid-November 2025. Please note, this is a competitive fund and only a small number of applicants will be successful.

The CEDO Team will provide feedback on your application if requested.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Stephanie Edwards at [cedo@rcs.ac.uk](mailto:cedo@rcs.ac.uk).

## Make It Happen Fund Assessment Criteria

Question	Weak (1- 3 point)	Moderate (4 - 7 points)	Strong (8 - 10 points)
<p><b>1.</b> Tell us about your project. This should be a compelling description of your project which outlines your aims or outcomes, potential collaborators and why you want to work with them. Please note that your project description should clearly connect to your budget and intended use of the funds.</p>	<p>Description of the project lacks clarity.</p> <p>The aims or outcomes of the proposal is lacking description.</p> <p>No information given on potential collaborators.</p>	<p>Satisfactory description of the project.</p> <p>The aim or outcomes of the proposal is clear.</p> <p>Some information provided on potential collaborators.</p>	<p>A clear and compelling description of the project.</p> <p>The aims or outcomes of the proposal is introduced well and garners interest in the project.</p> <p>Potential collaborators are identified and substantial reasons are given for working with them.</p>
<p><b>2.</b> Please outline the learning and development opportunity the Make It Happen Fund will enable and crucially the difference that it will make for you as a next step in your career.</p>	<p>No clear connection between the proposed project and the applicant's goals.</p> <p>Unclear how the project will contribute to the applicant's development.</p> <p>Poor description of how the applicant will learn and grow as a practitioner.</p>	<p>Sufficient connection made between the proposed project and the applicant's goals.</p> <p>Adequate description of how the project will contribute to the applicant's development.</p> <p>Partial explanation of how the applicant plans to learn and grow as a practitioner.</p>	<p>Applicant clearly describes their future goals and outlines how the proposed project will help them achieve those goals.</p> <p>Convincing description of how the project will contribute to the applicant's development.</p> <p>Clear plans for how the applicant plans to learn and grow as a practitioner.</p>
<p><b>3.</b> Budget: This should provide an outline of how the funds will be used. Estimated costs will be accepted. If are using funds as part of package of funding, you need</p>	<p>No information provided on how the financial award will be spent.</p> <p>Unclear why the applicant needs the award for their project. Little or no</p>	<p>Minimal sense of how the financial award will be spent. Some research evident.</p> <p>Satisfactory description of why the applicant needs the award for their</p>	<p>Strong description of how the award will impact the project and a clear outline of what the award will allow the applicant to achieve that would not otherwise be possible.</p>

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## Make It Happen Fund Assessment Criteria

to demonstrate the other sources of funding or stage of application (i.e. pending or writing application) within the budget.	evidence the award will impact the project in a conclusive way.	project. Some evidence of how the award will impact the project.	Strong evidence of research and/or quotes provided that provide sense of how the financial award will be spent.
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