

Emergency funding available for arts, culture and heritage doubled to £60 million to tackle impact of Omicron

- Funding now totalling £60 million will give crucial support to museums, cinemas, theatres and heritage across the country, with more time to get applications in to benefit as many of those affected as possible
- Additional immediate support also announced for creative freelancers impacted by the pandemic over the Christmas period

An additional £30 million in emergency funding has been made available through the Culture Recovery Fund to support museums, cinemas, theatres and heritage organisations with the impact of the Omicron variant this winter.

Announced as part of [the Chancellor's £1 billion support package](#), this funding recognises how important the festive period is for the arts, heritage and creative sectors and will provide vital emergency grants, doubling the amount that was previously available in the latest round of the Culture Recovery Fund.

Now open for applications, emergency grants will safeguard local museums and heritage, independent cinemas and regional theatres so that they can continue to support jobs, contribute to the economy, and make sure everyone has access to culture and heritage on their doorstep. The government is also extending the application window by a week until January 18, to give more organisations a chance to apply to the fund and help protect even more jobs.

Government funding via Arts Council England will also provide an immediate £1.5 million to support freelancers affected by the pandemic, alongside a further £1.35 million contribution from the theatre sector. This will provide grants of £650,000 each directly to the Theatre Artists Fund, Help Musicians, and £200,000 to a-n, the Artists Information Company, a charity for visual artists which will distribute cash to freelancers over the coming weeks.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

Our arts, culture and heritage sectors bring joy and enrichment to our day-to-day lives, and rarely more so than at Christmas. So we understand how devastating the uncertainty caused by Omicron has been.

This new funding, alongside the new grants of up to £6,000 we announced earlier this week, will support the sector as we together face this difficult time.

We've supported the cultural sector throughout the pandemic, and we'll continue to do so.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

From pantos to carol singing to festive film releases, Christmas is a very important time of year for so many of our brilliant arts and culture organisations who have now found themselves impacted by the Omicron variant.

It is absolutely right that we support them through this challenging time which is why we've doubled the emergency funding available from the Culture Recovery Fund and allowed more time for organisations to come forward.

The best thing we can all do to help protect ourselves and to get back to the culture we love is to Get Boosted Now.

Arts Minister Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said:

Thanks to the dedication and ingenuity of people working in the arts, culture and heritage – as well as unprecedented government support – these cherished sectors have already withstood many challenges over the course of the pandemic.

The new Omicron variant has added to those challenges by hitting at what is a crucial time of the year for so many artists and organisations. This additional emergency funding will make sure that those most at risk are able to receive the urgent help they need.

We are also working with Arts Council England and charities supporting artists across the sectors to help freelancers who have been particularly hit by the cancellation of productions in what should have been a busy and vibrant period. We will continue to work closely with groups and organisations across the sectors to see how we can best provide support to those affected.

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair, Arts Council England, said:

We are once again grateful to government for their support and investment which continues on an unprecedented scale to meet the challenges facing our arts and cultural organisations and creative freelancers.

We will work closely with the government to deliver funding at pace and will continue to support freelancers and cultural organisations to explore all available funding to help navigate these difficult times.

So far more than £1.5 billion from the £2 billion Culture Recovery Fund has

been allocated to around 5,000 organisations across the length and breadth of England, supporting them through the pandemic.

Notes to editors:

Organisations now will have until 18 January to submit their “Permission to Apply” forms or “Expression of Interest” forms to the relevant Arm’s-Length Body for the Emergency Resource Support strand of the Culture Recovery Fund.

The government’s £400 billion COVID-19 support package will continue to help businesses into spring next year and we will continue to respond proportionately to the changing path of the virus, as we have done since the start of the pandemic.

For more information on the Culture Recovery Fund, please visit:

[Arts Council England](#)

[British Film Institute](#)

[Historic England](#)

[National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)