

**Near Now Ideas Fund**

**Information and How to Apply**

Get your creative project off the ground with support from Broadway's Near Now Ideas Fund.

The Near Now Ideas Fund can help you start a new creative project that is enabled or inspired by technology.

We are offering up to £2,000 per proposal to support the important research and development (R&D) activity that is needed when a project is just getting started.

**Key Information**

**Total amount available:** £12,000

**Awards:** Up to £2,000

**Fund opens:** Thursday 30th September 2021

**Fund closes:** Tuesday 30th November 2021 or when funds are exhausted, whichever is sooner

**R&D activity:** Between now and March 2022

**Who can apply:** Artists and creatives based in the Midlands, UK, who are not in full-time or part-time education

You might be looking to do something short and simple, or you could have an idea for something more ambitious that needs extra time and resources to achieve. This is an opportunity for you to prove that your ideas are feasible, exciting, innovative and interesting.

**What does your project need to get started?**

The R&D activity you propose should involve any, or all, of the following types of activity:

**Learning**

Taking part in a workshop, course, or tutorial to understand something new. Working with a mentor or collaborator who will help you gain new skills and knowledge.

**Playing**

Spending time experimenting with tools, techniques or technologies in new ways.

**Prototyping**

Making quick, rough examples to test your ideas, validate your project and put new skills into practice.

**Testing**

Presenting your ideas, prototypes or work-in-progress to people who can give critical feedback.

Testing prototypes early creates valuable insights that shape the project vision.

Testing ideas in the open with potential users or audiences can be the fastest way to get real insights about how your idea fits in people's lives.

**We will support creative projects that are enabled or inspired by technology.**

This can include (but is not limited to):

* Digital and visual artworks
* Interactive and immersive experiences or performance
* New forms of storytelling
* Video or audio works
* Products and services

The project you are applying for should be either:

* A new project to be started between now and March 2022.
* An extension of an existing project that explores the use of technology in a way that is new to the project.

**We want to share your work with audiences.**

We are especially interested in funding projects that could be shared online or safely in-person at [Broadway](https://www.broadway.org.uk/), or elsewhere in Nottingham. We'll work with you to decide how to showcase your project, either in its early-stage or through demonstrating ambition for further development.

**We are looking for projects that have wider potential.**

Does your project have the potential to go beyond the scope of the R&D activity we can support?

We'd like to know what you think the future of your project could be and what you would do if you were offered the opportunity to continue developing it. If you're not quite sure, that's okay. We'll help you to think about it as part of your application.

**We can support R&D costs up to £2,000.**

Your project doesn’t need to cost exactly £2,000. You can apply for less.

You cannot use the award as match funding for other opportunities supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

You can put other money towards your project but we want you to clearly describe how this award would be used towards R&D activity you're planning to do by the end of March 2022.

We anticipate you might not previously have received much, or any, support from major funders.

**How can we help?**

As well as offering funding, we can help you with:

* Support to identify mentors, collaborators and learning opportunities.
* Guidance and practical advice on project management, finance, budgeting and purchasing.
* Production support.
* Support to promote your project and create opportunities to reach audiences and test your idea.
* Ongoing profile and promotion from Near Now, Broadway and our partners.
* Flexibility to work safely from your home, studio, or other location of your choosing.

**Planning to work with immersive technologies?**

Projects that involve the use of immersive technologies will also be invited to participate in additional skills and development activities provided within the [LEADD:NG](https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/arts/live-experiential-and-digital-diversification/experiential-and-digital-diversification-nottingham.aspx) project, which is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. This opportunity is dependent on specific eligibility criteria being met. More information about LEADD:NG is available [here](https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/arts/live-experiential-and-digital-diversification/experiential-and-digital-diversification-nottingham.aspx).

**Who can apply?**

The Near Now Ideas Fund is open to individuals or groups who can meet the following criteria:

* You are not currently in education.
* You are aged 18 or over.
* You (or the majority of you if working collaboratively) live or are professionally based in the Midlands, UK. These eligible areas are defined by Arts Council England's [regional map](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Map_area_boundaries.pdf) as listed below:

Birmingham, Coventry, Derby, Derbyshire, Dudley, Herefordshire, Leicester, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire (excluding N & NE Lincolnshire), Northamptonshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Sandwell, Shropshire, Solihull, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford & Wrekin, Walsall, Warwickshire, Wolverhampton, Worcestershire.

**How to apply**

Complete our online application form:

<https://broadway.typeform.com/to/Wd7UXC1h>

Or download a Word document version of the application form and send it, along with any supporting files, to [nearnow@broadway.org.uk](mailto:nearnow@broadway.org.uk) using the subject heading ‘Ideas Fund 2021’. We will also accept applications in the form of video or audio links/files using the application form as a guide to what content to include.

[DOWNLOAD APPLICATION FORM (WORD VERSION)](https://assets.nearnow.org.uk/downloads/Near-Now-Ideas-Fund-Application-Form.docx)

The application form will ask for some information about you and the R&D activity you'd like to do between now and March 2022.

You will also be asked to outline how you plan to spend the amount of funding you are requesting (up to £2,000). Examples of R&D costs include (but are not limited to):

* A fee for your time spent working on the project. We consider a fair fee to be £200–£250 per day (per person).
* Paying a mentor or collaborator a fee for their time and labour.
* New equipment, materials, tools and technologies.
* Learning and skills development costs such as workshops, courses, books, etc.
* Use of a studio, project space or other venue to carry out your R&D activity.

After submitting your form you will be asked to answer some equality and diversity monitoring questions.

**Need some help?**

We'd prefer to hear your half-baked idea than not at all!

If you're unsure about what to write in some parts of your application, don't worry. You can just submit an outline of your project idea and costs if it helps you to apply. Tell us that you need a little help to answer it fully and we'll get in touch to offer some follow up advice.

Or book in a 1:1 advice session with us before applying so we can help point you in the right direction. If you need some advice or have any questions about the Near Now Ideas Fund that need answering before you can apply, please get in touch.

We can answer your questions in writing or you can book a video or phone call with our Creative Producer. Email us at [nearnow@broadway.org.uk](mailto:nearnow@broadway.org.uk) to request a 1:1 advice session and we'll find a time that works for you.

**How do we choose who gets an award?**

We aim to make around 8–10 awards.

Your application will be assessed by Broadway staff and experienced creative practitioners, against the following criteria:

**Activity**

The proposed activity is enabled or inspired by technology. The activity is clear and achievable in the fund’s timescale and award amount.

**Value for Money**

The activity demonstrates value for money. Activity costs have been carefully considered, are reasonable and justifiable, and are of clear benefit to you and your creative practice.

**Impact**

The activity is culturally relevant. The activity will significantly benefit your creative practice. You demonstrate ambition to progress your project beyond this initial R&D activity.

**Audience**

Consideration has been given to what audience the project could reach beyond its R&D.

**What are the deadlines?**

Applications will close at 11:59PM on Tuesday 30th November 2021 or when the funds are exhausted, whichever comes sooner.

We will be considering applications and awarding funds every two weeks.

For example, for applications received between 1st–15th October, decisions will be given by 29th October.

Near Now is Broadway's studio for arts, design and innovation. We work with people and companies to make, and make sense of, technology in everyday life.

See nearnow.org.uk and broadway.org.uk for more information.

The Near Now Ideas Fund is supported using public funding by Arts Council England.

