

LibraryOn Grants: Round Three - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. What does capital funding mean in relation to this grant programme?

Capital funding can be used towards purchasing assets or equipment, internal staff working directly on the creation of the asset, and external professional services used to directly create the asset. All expenditure should be checked with your finance teams prior to submission as your organisations' policies may allow you to capitalise more expenditure, or they may be more restrictive.

Please note that marketing, photography and videography are not covered by this ground round, however, you can use funding from elsewhere if you want to include these elements in your proposal.

Q. What does significant enhancement mean in relation to LMS or software upgrades?

We can support the building of new features, the purchase of new software, or LMS upgrades. Where software purchases are made, these cannot be ready built systems/licenses or an extension of existing software licenses. Please consult your organisations' finance team for guidance on the level of complexity required in order to capitalise software costs. This may mean requiring the system to have elements which have a bespoke build to suit your service.

Q. Can I put additional funding towards activity?

Yes. We can fund 100% of project costs, although you are welcome to add any additional funding of your own. You can use additional funding to support any non-capital costs associated with your project. Use the budget section of the application form to tell us about any additional income and the elements of expenditure to which it relates.

Q. Can I include subscription costs within the project budget?

Yes. You can include costs for a maximum 12-month subscription. If a subscription goes beyond 12 months, you will need to demonstrate how these costs will be met from other funding sources.

Q. Can I apply for staff training as part of the grant?

Expenditure which trains staff to operate an asset is not capital expenditure towards an asset. In some cases, organisations may capitalise training expenditure which can be directly attributable towards the generation of an asset, but please consult your finance team if you think you may incur this type of expenditure. If you require additional training

that can't be covered from your existing budgets, you can use funding from elsewhere to support these aspects of the project. Please remember to put this in the budget section of the full application form.

Q. Does the grant have to be spent by March 2026 or can it be extended?

All expenditure must be completed by 9 March 2026 to meet our grant conditions for Arts Council. Final project monitoring forms must be submitted by the end of March 2026.

Q. Can I apply to improve/upgrade my LMS system?

Yes, provided this enables you enhance your Join Online offer, or support your listing on the LibraryOn website, for example through catalogue integration.

Q. Can I apply for development costs?

Development costs are allowable if they will result in the creation or upgrade of an asset. Upgrading an asset should include material changes to the asset and does not include the general expansion/increase of content. Expenditure related to a prior research phase to test feasibility or market demand is not eligible. Please consult your finance team to ensure that any development costs you are planning can be capitalised on your balance sheet.

Q. Can we use subcontractors to deliver activity on our behalf?

Yes.

Q. Can archives apply?

Yes.

Q. Can individual branch libraries apply?

No. Applications can only be from library services or a consortium of services.

Q. Can I apply as an individual service and also apply as part of a consortium?

Yes. Services can make up to two applications and be a member of a consortium bid.

Q. Can any library service apply?

Libraries must be part of a statutory service to be eligible. That means voluntary, academic and some community libraries are unable to apply. Prison libraries are also not eligible to apply. Non-statutory library services may be able to apply as part of a consortium bid led by a statutory service.

Q. I've been awarded funding in a previous round(s) of the LibraryOn grants programme. Am I eligible to apply in this round?

Yes, although if we receive more applications than we can fund, authorities who have not received funding in previous rounds may be prioritised.

Q. I was unsuccessful in a previous round either at the Expression of Interest stage or at Full Application. Am I eligible to apply in this round either for the same project or a different one?

Not all projects that were eligible in previous rounds are eligible in round three. Please check the guidance for more information about eligible project types.

Q. How many awards do you expect to make?

We anticipate awarding between 15 and 20 grants, depending on how many applications we receive. You can apply for between £10,000 and £30,000.

Q. I'm a statutory service and want to apply for activity in community libraries, am I eligible?

Yes. The lead applicant must be a statutory service, however activity can involve community managed libraries as part of a consortium.

Q. Are there any restrictions on the number of applications from any one region?

No. All services from the same region are eligible to apply. When making decisions on which applications to support, we aim to fund a balance of projects based on geographic spread, urban / rural mix and types of library authorities.

Q. Can my project be shorter than 17 weeks?

Yes. There is no minimum delivery period, although the project cannot run for more than 17 weeks in total.

Q. Are future rounds of this funding planned?

Our current funding from Arts Council only covers one final round of grants. However, never say never - there may be more opportunities in the future!