

# TEES VALLEY

## Tees Valley Artists of the Year 2024

An Accelerator of Tees Valley Talent

Guidance Document



## Programme Overview

This programme is for artists or artist collectives living in Tees Valley. The Tees Valley Artists of the Year 2024 will be exceptional in their field; have a body of original creative work; have received professional recognition and need an extra boost and support to make a career-tipping difference – this could be selling your work to a national market, touring your first national show, cutting a record deal or maybe paving the way to breaking onto the international stage.

You might describe yourself as an emerging artist with building momentum or an established creative who has been under-celebrated as a result of the barriers you have faced in accessing wider markets. Whatever your starting point, if you can demonstrate your talent and potential, and tell us what difference this support will make, we want to hear from you.

The programme has been launched by the Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority, will be overseen by the Tees Valley Business Board, and is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

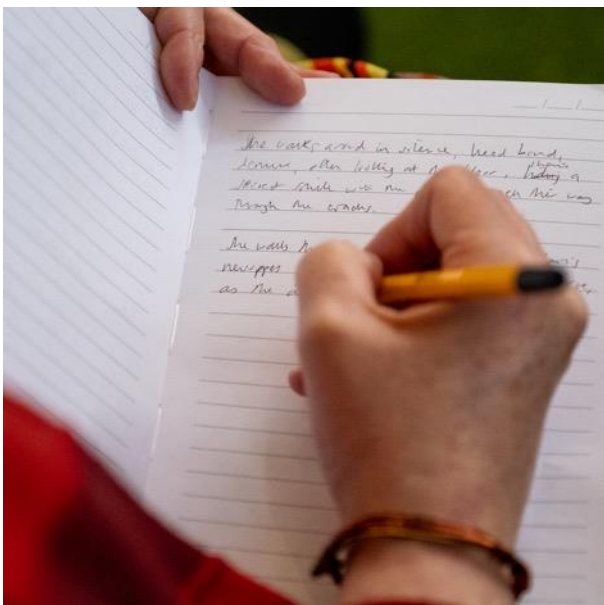
## Programme Context

Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority, Tees Valley Business Board and the wider Tees Valley culture sector have a shared appetite for championing and growing regionally made work. We have an ambition to grow Tees Valley as an engine room of creative content production and to make our region a fantastic and well-supported place to make work.

The Artists of the Year programme has been designed to:

- Recognise and celebrate those making exceptional, exciting and high-quality work in Tees Valley.
- Strengthen the financial capacity of leading artists, expanding production capability.
- Connect Tees Valley artists outwardly: made in Tees Valley, relevant (inter)nationally.

- Build the business skills of Tees Valley artists, supporting sustainable careers.
- Centre regional Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and sector development organisations (SDOs) in the process of recognising and nurturing talent.



## Eligibility Criteria

**Important:**

Can you answer yes to all these eligibility statements? If you can, we would welcome your application.

- You are an individual creative or a creative collective, i.e. more than one person working together to develop creative content (e.g. a music band, co-theatre makers, artist collective).
- You live in the Tees Valley and can demonstrate your connection and commitment to the Tees Valley, and / or you have an operational base in the Tees Valley and the majority of your work is delivered / made in the Tees Valley.
- You consider your creative work to fit in one or more of the following categories - Dance, Film, Literature, Live Performance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts
- You have a body of original creative work.
- You have received some kind of professional recognition for your work, for example you have:
  - ☞ been featured or profiled in press/media
  - ☞ had your work shown / performed / exhibited multiple times
  - ☞ a fan-base, audiences, buyers, commissioners
  - ☞ publishing credits
  - ☞ won an award
  - ☞ earned income as a result of your creative output

***Please note:*** this list is not exhaustive and should be considered within the context of the artform you work in.

- You have a career-tipping milestone you want to achieve, and you can tell us about it.
- You have the intention of earning the majority of your income through your creative practice.
- You have a separate bank account for your creative business / work OR will commit to setting one up if successful.



- You are a Freelancer/Sole trader OR a partnership OR a company registered with Companies House.

If you answered YES to all these questions, then read on... If you are still not sure if you are eligible, then drop us a line at [creativeplace@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:creativeplace@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk).

## The Programme of Support

Up to five artists/artist collectives will be selected as Tees Valley Artists of the Year 2024 and invited to take part in the talent accelerator programme.

Each artist/collective will receive the following support and investment over a one-year period from April 2024 – March 2025:

## Financial Investment

### The Bursary

- The successful artist/collective will receive £21,840, which is equivalent of one year of UK Real Living Wage. This should be allocated to the artist/collective's time spent on:
  - ☞ the development & production of creative content/creative practice
  - ☞ associated administration
  - ☞ planning and development work to reach your career tipping goal
  - ☞ time accessing the mentoring and other programme support
  - ☞ meeting the goals set in your development plan (see below)

### Development Budget

- Up to £8,160 to be invested in materials, equipment, marketing collateral, professional fees, courses, conferences, travel, accommodation that supports your development goals.

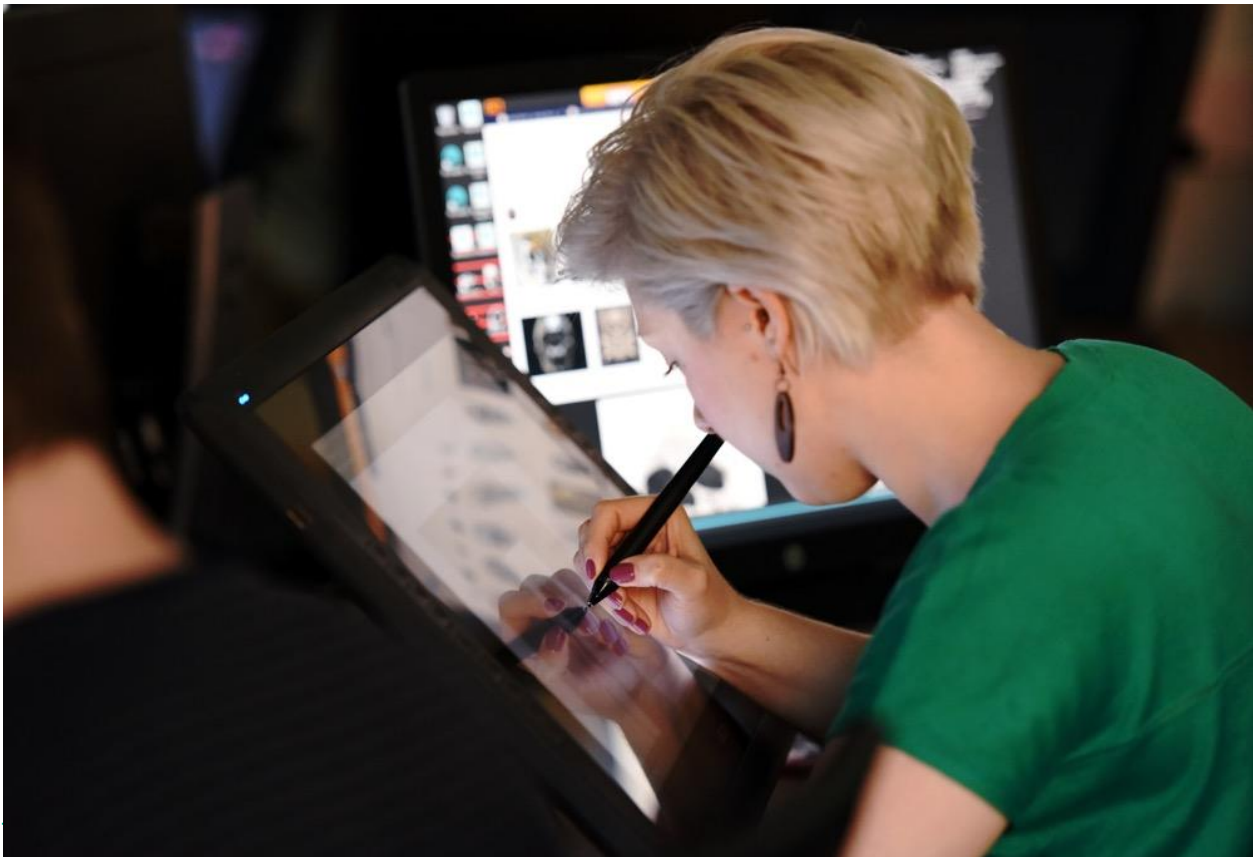
### Development Support

- Development and network support from the most appropriate regional Arts Council NPO or SDO in the region. They will help you to create a development plan for the year and support you to achieve it.

- Mentoring support – an industry recognised mentor from outside the region to support development, networking, and be a sounding board.
- PR and Marketing support – tailored, industry-specific support to help raise your profile and support the sale/commissioning of work (inter)nationally.
- Tailored fundraising support.
- Peer support/training – regular workshops and meetings with all selected Tees Valley Artists of the Year.
- You'll also be networked into lots of opportunities and events taking place across the region to help you build your network, extend your profile and achieve your goals.

### Personal Access Costs

- A personal access budget will be made available to support any selected artist(s) who are D/deaf or disabled, neurodivergent, experiencing learning difficulties, have a mental health condition or have a long-term health condition. These costs will be to help selected artists to participate in the programme and/or for the management of the grant.



## Key Dates

### Applications open:

Monday 12 February 2024.

### Deadline for applications:

12 noon, Thursday 7 March 2024

### Notification of outcome:

Applicants notified if they have been shortlisted or not by: **5pm, Friday 15 March 2024**

Shortlisted applicant interviews: **Wednesday 20 March 2024 and Thursday 21 March 2024**

Shortlisted applicants notified of outcome by: **5pm, Tuesday 2 April 2024**

### Programme Length:

The programme lasts for one year, running from April 2024 – 31 March 2025



## How to apply

### STEP 1

Read all the guidance and supporting information to ensure you are eligible to apply and understand the requirements of the programme. If you have any questions, please get in touch.

Email: [creativeplace@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:creativeplace@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk)

### STEP 2

Submit your application using the online platform Zealous by **12 noon, Thursday 7 March 2024.**

#### [APPLY HERE](#)

You can save and return to the online application form. However, please **download the offline version** of the application form, which guides you through the form and allows you to draft your application prior to uploading your information to the online application form.

The application form is made up of 6 sections.

1. [Portfolio Submission](#)
2. [Basic Information](#)
3. [Why You? \(which can be answered in writing or submitted via video\)](#)
4. [Your Referee](#)
5. [Financial Due Diligence](#)
6. [Subsidy Control](#)

## Section 1: Your portfolio submission

For the Portfolio submission, you can **upload up to seven files or embedded media links** that showcase your work and evidence professional recognition such as; press coverage, audience/commissioner feedback, posters, flyers.

**Up to two files / embedded media links can be up to five minutes long or five x A4 pages long. The remaining files/media uploads (up to 5) should be no longer than one minute or one x A4 page.**



**The remaining files/media uploads (up to 5) should be no longer than one minute or one x A4 page.**

Writers can submit one of the following as part of their seven files / embedded media links allowance:

- Fiction / Non-fiction: 3000–6000 words and a synopsis of up to 600 words.
- Poetry: 15 poems or equivalent for longer sequences and a description of your project of up to 600 words.
- Script: 10 pages of sample script and a synopsis of up to 600 words.

### **File types**

File types accepted for upload on the Zealous Platform are:

- Images: jpg, jpeg png, gif, tiff, tif.
- Video: mp4, webm, ogg.
- Documents: pdf, xml, doc xlsx, xls, open office.
- Audio: mp3, wav, ogg.

The Zealous platform will enable you to embed URLs from the following platforms:

- YouTube
- Vimeo
- Spotify
- Soundcloud
- Sketchfab
- Slideshare

### **File Size**

The max file size per upload is set at 4GB. However, we highly recommend you keep your files as small possible while retaining quality.

### **Uploading your files/URLs**

On the Portfolio Submission page, you are required to upload at least one file/embedded media link. You can continue to upload a further seven additional files/embedded media links on this page as per the guidelines above.

**IF YOU ARE SUBMITTING YOUR ANSWERS TO THE 'WHY YOU' SECTION VIA VIDEO YOU MUST UPLOAD YOUR VIDEO ON THE SUBMISSION PAGE.**

It will ask you to select which category you would like to submit to. Please choose the category you feel your creative practice/work most aligns to (we recognise you may have a multi-disciplinary practice).

Dance, Film, Literature, Live Performance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts

In the Title section – please enter ‘Tees Valley Artists of the Year’.

In the Short Description section – please enter ‘Tees Valley Artists of the Year’

In the Field(s) section – please enter closest match to your work (these are standard form dropdowns and won't be taken into consideration.)

In the Role(s) section enter ‘Artist’ or ‘Artist collective’

You can add a description to each of the files/URLs you are uploading if you wish.

## Section 2: Basic information about you / your collective

This section collects basic contact and eligibility information (see offline application form for full details) and asks you to articulate your connection and commitment to the Tees Valley (Max 200 words).

## Section 3: Why you?

This section can be completed **in writing** on the online application form **OR via video** (which you must upload on the Submission page). The video must not be longer than 10 minutes in total.

Whether submitting in writing or via video, applicants must answer the following questions:

- A. **Please give an overview of your work/practice.** (Max 500 words / 5 mins). Within your answer, please ensure that you demonstrate that you meet the programme criteria:

- You consider your creative work fitting in one or more of the following categories - Dance, Film, Literature, Live Performance, Music, Theatre, Visual Arts
- You have a body of original creative work that has been shared in a professional context.
- Your intention to earn the majority of your income through your creative practice.
- You have received professional recognition for your work, for example you have:
  - ☞ been featured or profiled in press/media
  - ☞ had your work shown / performed / exhibited multiple times
  - ☞ a fan-base, audiences, buyers, commissioners
  - ☞ publishing credits
  - ☞ won an award
  - ☞ earned income as a result of your creative output

**Please note:** this list is not exhaustive and should be considered within the context of the artform you work in.

- B. What is the career-tipping milestone you want to achieve?** For example, a significant tour/exhibition of your work, a record deal, national buyers/commissioners of your work, a publishing deal, a film commission. *(Max 500 words / five mins)*

We recognise everyone's journey will be different and will be subject to the applicant's starting point. We are looking for applicants who demonstrate ambition and aspiration, an awareness of how they could achieve their goals and how this support will help them to get there.

## Section 4: Your referee

Provide a supporting statement from a 'referee'. The referee should be familiar with your work, established in their field of specialism and qualified to comment on your talent and potential, for example, someone that has commissioned/exhibited/programmed your work, an established artist, a senior cultural leader, a senior course leader. The referee must provide a short overview of why they are supporting your application and why they

think you should be one of Tees Valley's Artists of the Year. (Max 300 words)

## Section 5: Financial due diligence

You will need to consent to TVCA undertaking financial due diligence checks using the information you supply in this application form.

## Section 6: Subsidy control

The UK subsidy control regime began on 4 January 2023. It enables public authorities, including devolved administrations and local authorities, to give subsidies that are tailored to their local needs, and that drive economic growth while minimising distortion to UK competition and protecting our international obligations. Under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 ('the Act'), Tees Valley Combined Authority is under a legal obligation to design any subsidy to ensure that it complies with the Act.

All applicants are expected to complete the subsidy declaration within the application form when applying to this programme. The EU State aid rules no longer apply to subsidies granted in the UK following the end of the transition period, which ended on 31 December 2020.

Tees Valley Combined Authority is providing this grant to any business / organisation as a Minimum Financial Assistance (MFA) subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act (2022).

MFA subsidy limit is £315,000 over a three-year period (including your current financial year and the previous two financial years). You are asked to confirm whether or not you will exceed the MFA limit within the application form.

For more information on the UK Subsidy Control Regime please go to <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime>



## How We Assess Applications

### 1. Eligibility checks

All applications received will initially be assessed to confirm eligibility.

### 2. Assessment, scoring and shortlisting

Applications will be assessed and scored by senior representatives from the artform relevant regional Arts Council NPO or SDO. Your application scores will be weighted as follows -

- 50% Artistic quality of your portfolio
- 50% Your response to the application question

Following this process, a shortlist will be created. All shortlisted applicants will be asked to attend an interview with some members of the assessment panel.

### 3. Shortlisted candidates invited to interview

All applicants will be notified as to whether or not they have been shortlisted by email by - 5pm, Friday 15 March 2024.

**Interviews will take place Wednesday 20 March 2024 and Thursday 21 March 2024**

### 4. Final selection

Following the interviews, an Assessment Panel will be convened which will be made up of up to 12 senior representatives from:

- Regional NPOs and SDOs
- Arts Council England
- Tees Valley Combined Authority

The panel will consider the application scores and feedback from the interviewing panels in order to reach a consensus on which five artists/collectives should be awarded Tees Valley Artists of the Year 2024. As part of the panel's consideration, a balancing process will be undertaken to identify a final cohort which represents the region's geography, diversity and artform specialisms.

Please note, there is not an exact science to this process – to an extent these decisions will always be subjective (as is art) but our panel is committed to giving equal consideration to all applicants and identifying the strongest regional talent in the best position for the programme to make a sustainable impact.

Shortlisted applicants will be informed of the final decision by **5pm, Tuesday 2 April 2024**

Shortlisted applicants that are not successful will, with permission, be connected with the most relevant NPO or SDO to schedule a development meeting and you will receive signposting to relevant support networks.



## Successful Applicants

### If I am successful, what happens next?

#### 1. Financial due diligence checks will be undertaken

**This may include:**

- Authenticating the personal identities of persons with significant control and carrying out a financial/fraud risk assessment.
- Carrying out a general risk assessment of the individual/ organisation using Experian and Companies House records.
- Carrying out a financial viability assessment of each individual/organisation using their accounts together with Experian and Companies House records.
- Carrying out a reputational risk assessment of each applicant.
- Validating grantees' bank accounts using Experian and/or CreditSafe.

**We may request additional documentation in order to complete these checks such as:**

- Evidence of existing bank account.
- Details of any person who has control of the business including the completion of a 'fit and proper person' declaration.

Please note that if you have previously undergone financial due diligence with TVCA, we may be able to use some of the previous checks as evidence in this process.

#### 2. Indicative offer letter issued

Once these checks are complete, TVCA will issue you with an indicative offer letter, which will contain conditions related to participation in the programme.

We will then enter into a period of negotiation with programme recipients to agree and finalise a funding agreement.

You will be issued with a Minimum Financial Assistance (MFA) letter to confirm that the investment you are receiving from Tees Valley Combined

Authority is considered a subsidy and that you confirm that you will not exceed the threshold of £315,000 cumulated over this and the previous two financial years, as specified in Section 36(1) of the [Subsidy Control Act 2022](#).

Following this, you will be issued with a Funding Agreement.

### **3. Issue funding agreement**

The Funding Agreement will state what we have agreed you will spend the money on, any outputs, targets and conditions we have set and how much money you receive and when.

### **4. Payment of grant**

The bursary element of the grant will be paid in four equal stages, quarterly in advance. We will withhold 10% of the bursary element of the grant which will be paid on completion of the programme and subject to submission of all required documentation. The development budget will be paid in arrears upon submission of details and proof of expenditure quarterly (see Monitoring and Evaluation section below).



## Programme Management and Expectations

You will need to fully commit to the programme, participating in all the support offered and making the most of the opportunity presented.

We will work to extend the impacts of our investment and to add further value to the work of our partners by making connections with the wider resource of TVCA. We will work with you to ensure connectivity with the Marketing & Communications and Business Solutions teams and ask that you commit to providing information, copy and images to facilitate promotion of the programme, as necessary.

You will need to commit to working with and providing information and data to our external evaluators, who are conducting a longitudinal study on the effect and impact of TVCA investment on the cultural industries sector.

A Creative Place Development Officer will be identified as your main TVCA contact. They will work to support you through the programme and assist with grant management. You will need to provide them with regular updates on progress.

You will be required to meet and work with your appointed NPO/SDO to, in a first step, create your development plan and then meet on a monthly basis. These meetings are designed to support your development, connect you into relevant networks and check in on your progress against the goals you set in your development plan.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

### Commencement of programme

When you start the programme, we will ask you to complete a survey that provides a picture of your work patterns, creative content production and financial situation e.g. income, sales, commissions etc. in 2023/2024. This is so we can track your progress throughout the year and have a baseline from which to track the impacts of the programme.

### Quarterly reporting

To trigger each quarterly payment as outlined in your funding agreement, you must provide the following information and documentation via a quarterly report, using a TVCA template:

- Evidence that you have paid the bursary from your business account to your personal account(s).
- Details of development budget expenditure to date (quarterly).
- We will sample approximately 10% of expenditure quarterly. (i.e. we will ask for evidence of some invoices being paid).
- A short progress report against milestones, targets and project outcomes as detailed in the development plan you create with support from your assigned NPO/SDO, including how you have spent your time in that quarter, any leads, commissions, income, press coverage etc. you have generated from your creative output/content creation.
- We will support you to detail main risks to the delivery of/your participation in the programme, how you will reduce/mitigate against them, and update this quarterly.
- You will be asked to provide any marketing material, photographs, video content relating to your participation in the programme.

### End of programme reporting

At the end of the programme, you will be asked to provide the following information:

- A final narrative report that details -

- ☞ your achievements during the programme, impact of the programme on your artistic practice/career/income
  - ☞ lessons learnt
  - ☞ progress against milestones, targets and programme outcomes as detailed in your development plan
  - ☞ your next steps/plans for 2025/2026 now you have completed the programme
- You will complete a follow-up survey to track the impacts of the investment and support based on the baseline survey information you provided at the beginning of the programme.
  - You will be asked to provide marketing material, photographs, video content relating to your participation in the programme.

## External evaluation

Successful applicants must also commit to working with TVCA's appointed external evaluators to provide data as requested and be available for interview and/or provide a case study. TVCA will be commissioning a film to capture the artists' journey across the year and you will need to commit to being involved through interviews and providing access to the film crew.

## All those who receive TVCA investment must:

- Ensure that all records, including financial records relating to the programme are accurate and up to date. You must keep these records for at least seven years after the programme has finished.
- Give us, or any person nominated by us, access to all records relating to the Project or other projects funded by us upon demand within 14 days, including (but not limited to) accounts and any other financial records, VAT and any other tax records. We can ask for access to these records for up to seven years after the programme has finished.
- Where requested, provide us with clear and accurate accounts that cover the period of the Programme. These accounts must follow any relevant legal requirements for accounts, audit or examination of accounts, annual reports or annual returns and must clearly show income and expenditure. We may ask for proof of expenditure.

## Support With Your Application

We encourage you to read all the guidance and supporting information. However, if you have any accessibility needs or further questions not covered in the supporting information please email:

[creativeplace@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:creativeplace@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk) and your enquiry will be directed to the appropriate team member. Any clarification questions can be submitted until 5pm, 29 March 2024. Questions will be published on the FAQs section of the UKSPF Artists of the Year Call page.

If you are not eligible there may be other forms of support via Tees Valley Business Growth Support. For more information, [click here](#). We would also recommend signing up to the TVCA Newsletter [here](#) (select creative or culture and tourism when describing your business) to receive the latest news, networking events and funding opportunities from TVCA, and other regional and national bodies.





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VALLEY**

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