

Music & Drama Access Fund Information and Guidance

What is the Music & Drama Access Fund?

Piloted in 2020, the Music & Drama Access Fund provides small grants for Trinity candidates (via their teacher/Access Fund applicant) based in the UK and Ireland who experience barriers to accessing our music and drama qualifications. These barriers could include having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities / Additional Learning Needs, living in areas of rural isolation and/or socio-economic deprivation, being in a specific minority group and more. The grant will be used in order to help these candidates achieve one of our music or drama qualifications.

Who can apply for a grant?

Candidates must be nominated, via a standard application form, by their music or drama teacher/tutor or other appropriate person/professional who is familiar with their background and why they experience barriers to accessing our qualifications. Candidates cannot be put forward by someone they are related to or hold a personal relationship with, and they cannot put themselves forward for a grant.

Who can the grant be applied for?

The Access Fund grant is open to:

- an individual candidate
- a group of candidates working towards the same exam
- a group of individual candidates who are all working towards different exams but are being nominated by the same applicant.

Please note: if you are applying for a group of individuals, their application will be reviewed, and either accepted or declined, as a group. If you would like your candidates to be considered on their individual circumstances (as opposed to collectively), you will need to submit an individual application for each candidate.

We will only accept a maximum of 10 application forms from any one applicant per round. If you have a strong reason for wanting to submit more than this, please get in contact with the Access Fund Manager (accessfund@trinitycollege.co.uk) before the submission deadline.

The Access Fund grant is only open to candidates based in the UK and Ireland.

Who can't the grant be applied for?

The Access Fund grant cannot be used for:

- candidates based outside the UK and Ireland
- candidates who are not experiencing barriers to accessing our music and drama qualifications

Please note, the Access Fund is highly competitive and designed to fund candidates on a short-term basis and should not be considered a long-term funding stream. Our ethos is to try and award grants to as many different eligible candidates as possible; applicants should be aware that applications received for candidates who have previously been in receipt of a Music & Drama Access Fund grant, may have this taken into consideration.

How much can we apply for?

You can apply for a maximum of £1,500 per group or £300 per candidate (or equivalent in Euros for applicants from the Republic of Ireland). A candidate cannot be awarded a grant of more than £300 in any calendar year.

What can the grant money be spent on?

The grant can be spent on any of the following:

- Exam fees
- Contributions towards the cost of lessons
- Contributions towards costs of musical instrument hire/purchase where appropriate
- Other relevant equipment/materials needed (replacement strings, reeds, mouthpieces, drumsticks, music stand, etc)
- Equipment hire, where appropriate
- Sheet music
- An accompanist
- Buying books/play scripts
- Exam venue hire (for private centres only)
- Travel to exam venue

If there is something else that does not appear on this list which your candidate/s need the grant money for, please detail this in your application.

What can't the grant money be spent on?

The grant cannot be spent on the following:

- Core costs, e.g. overheads
- Refreshments (apart from in exceptional cases)
- Advertising
- Equipment that is not deemed essential or valuable to the exam that's being taken
- Purchase of equipment where renting/hiring is a more cost-effective option
- Training/CPD for teachers
- Exams that have already taken place
- Exams that are taking place within 8 weeks of the application deadline*
- Activities that are not clearly linked to a candidate working towards a Trinity College London music or drama qualification

*It can take a minimum of 8 weeks for the grant to reach your bank account. Therefore, we are unable to fund activities due to start less than 8 weeks from the application deadline as we cannot guarantee the funds would reach you in time.

How do we apply?

Applications are made via an online application form on Smart Survey. Please see the [Trinity website here](#) for details.

The application process is relatively simple and will require you to answer a series of questions, and to write a budget explaining how you plan to spend the grant. You should use this guidance to help you prepare your answers.

If you have any access requirements, are not able to complete the form online or have any questions about how to apply, please contact the Access Fund Manager: accessfund@trinitycollege.co.uk.

Guidance for applying

These guidance notes will help you prepare your answers and you should refer to them throughout your application.

The best way to prepare your application is to use the [mock application](#) form to draft your responses. You can then copy and paste your text directly into the online application form.

Some important things to remember:

- You can save your application and return to it at a later date – click on 'save and continue later'
- You will need to enter an answer for each question marked with an asterisk*, even if the answer is 'N/A' or a zero
- The more information you can give us, the better understanding we will have of your application, so please ensure you **write detailed responses** to the questions – especially for the questions that are scored.

Your budget

All applicants must complete an Access Fund budget form. The budget you present should describe the most likely scenario and should be for the total cost of what you are applying for each candidate or group.

On your budget you must input ALL items of expenditure, indicating which of these are to be covered by the Access Fund grant. Your budget must include the costs of the examination fee and whether these costs are being applied for or not; without this it will not be clear how the candidate/s will achieve their qualification/s.

You will also need to include any other income, for example from other funding bodies, parents, schools, the candidate themselves, in-kind donations, etc.

Make sure that the costs in your budget are realistic and accurate, otherwise your application may be unsuccessful.

If you do not complete a budget or it is not accurate, your application may be unsuccessful.

Example of a completed budget:

Music and Drama Access Fund budget					
Applicant name		Tom Smith			
Centre name (if known)		High Street Secondary School			
Candidate name (if applicable)		Jane Jones			
Refer to the Access Fund guidance for information about filling out the budget. You must include all items of expenditure, not just those you are applying to the Access Fund for.					
EXPENDITURE					
Description (Please give specific details e.g. for exam entry fees - the grade level and instrument/subject, what method of travel, specific music score, etc)	quantity	unit type (exam fee, day/session fee)	unit cost	total	Will this be covered by the Access Fund?
Exam entry fee - Grade 5 Piano (Digital)	1	Exam fee	£68.00	£68.00	Yes
Piano lessons	6	Lesson fee	£25.00	£150.00	Yes
Travel by bus to exam (return journey)	2	Travel cost	£5.00	£10.00	Yes
Accompanist for exam and pre exam run through	1	Accompanist fee	£63.00	£63.00	Yes
Music score - 'Kettle Rag' by Norton in 'Raise the Bar Piano: Grades 3-5' book	1	Music score	£8.99	£8.99	Yes
Other Piano lessons	10	Lesson fee	£25.00	£250.00	No
				£0.00	
				£0.00	
				£0.00	
				£0.00	
Access Fund amount (you must calculate this)				£299.99	
Total expenditure (automatically calculated)				£549.99	
Total funds from other sources, if applicable (automatically calculated from Income box below)				£250.00	
INCOME					
Other funding - name of funder / source of funding:	amount	confirmed?	awaiting decision?	if yes please state expected decision date:	
Other Piano lessons - funded by candidate's school	£250.00	Yes	No		
Total other funding	£250.00				

Question guidance

Use these notes alongside the mock application form to help you prepare your application

Applicant details

The applicant is the person applying on behalf of the candidate/s who require the grant. We anticipate that this will usually be a teacher/tutor as they are most likely to know the candidates best. The applicant **must not** be the candidate or related to the candidate/s in any way, or hold a personal relationship with the candidate/s.

Q1 – Q2: Please supply your name, contact details and your address. The reason we need you to supply your postal address is because the platform we use to send out the Access Fund grant agreements/Ts&Cs (Adobe EchoSign) to successful applicants is unable to send them without a postal address.

Q3: Please tell us what your relationship is to the candidate/s. Are you their peripatetic music teacher, drama teacher, school teacher, a Trinity Private Centre Rep or Trinity Public Centre Rep. If your relationship to the candidate/s is not listed, please provide details in the comments.

Q4: Please tell us which Trinity exam centre you anticipate entering your candidate/s through. If you are entering your candidates for digital exams, you will still need to stipulate a Trinity centre at the time of booking; we advise this should be either your nearest centre or the one you most frequently use so please enter this here. Details of our Public exam centres can be found here:

[Classical & Jazz](#)

[Rock & Pop](#)

[Drama](#)

Q5– Q6: Please tell us whether you have entered candidates for Trinity exams before and if so, when you last entered candidates. We also need to know whether you have applied for the Music & Drama Access Fund grant before and, if so, which years and whether you were successful.

Please note, the Access Fund is highly competitive and designed to fund candidates on a short-term basis and should not be considered a long-term funding stream. Our ethos is to try and award grants to as many different eligible candidates as possible; applicants should be aware that applications received for candidates who have previously been in receipt of a Music & Drama Access Fund grant, may have this taken into consideration.

About the Access Fund Candidate/s

The candidates are the learners who need the grant in order to help them take a Trinity music or drama exam. There are no age restrictions in place for candidates.

Q7: Please provide the following information about the candidate/s:

How many candidates are you nominating for an Access Fund grant in this application?

Please tell us the total number of candidates you are nominating for an Access Fund grant in this form.

Are you submitting more than one application to the Music & Drama Access Fund this round? If so, how many?

Please tell us how many application forms you are submitting to the Music & Drama Access Fund this round. We will only accept a maximum of 10 application forms from any one applicant per round. If you have a strong reason for wanting to submit more than this, please get in contact with the Access Fund Manager (accessfund@trinitycollege.co.uk) before the submission deadline.

Are you applying for funds needed for:

- an individual candidate
- a group of candidates working towards the same exam (for example, the whole group needs financial support with travelling to the exam venue, or the whole group/class are working towards taking their Grade 1 Singing exam)
- a group of individual candidates who are all working towards different exams but are being nominated by the same applicant

Please note that, for the individual circumstances of a candidate to be considered, an application must be submitted specifically for them. Group applications (whether they be working towards the same exam or not) will be considered and approved or declined as such. If submitting multiple applications, please take the time to consider and provide the relevant details for each; do not simply copy and paste the information across your

applications. Each application must be unique and specific to the candidate's/candidates' needs. Copy/pasted applications will be automatically rejected.

Q8. Please use the table to tell us the candidate name/s, what type of exam they are hoping to take and when they are aiming to take their exam.

If you can't disclose the name/s, please put 'Candidate 1' or something similar.

The candidate name/s are needed so that we can differentiate between applications and so we can ensure exam fees are logged accurately on our systems.

We expect the candidate/s in receipt of an Access Fund grant to work towards achieving a Trinity qualification. We therefore need to know which exam your candidate/s are working towards. Please tell us if they are planning to take a face-to-face or digital exam, which grade level and instrument/subject they are working towards and, for music, please state whether it is Classical & Jazz, Rock & Pop or Awards & Certificates in Musical Development i.e. Grade 6 Piano Classical, Grade 6 Drums Rock & Pop, Grade 4 Musical Theatre Solo.

We also need to know what month/year they are hoping to take their exam. This should be within the next 12 months, apart from in exceptional circumstances which should be detailed in the comments section.

Q9. How old are the candidate/s that will benefit from this grant? Please enter how many candidates identify as male, female and/or non-binary for each category in the table. If this application is for an individual candidate, please only complete this for the individual this application is for.

It is useful for us to get a clear picture of the candidates you are working with. We need to know how many candidates are in which age group and gender. This also supports our reporting on use of the grants.

Q10. We need to know about the candidates you're applying for and why you are applying for an Access Fund grant for them. Please indicate from the list below which access barrier/s your candidate/s are experiencing with regard to being able to take their Trinity exam. Your answer to this question will be scored.

We want to know about the candidate/s you are working with and why you think we should award them an Access Fund grant. Please tell us about the barriers each candidate is facing with regards to accessing one of our qualifications.

Important note: if your Access Fund application is successful and you come to booking the exam, the information you supply in this application about your candidate/s will not be passed onto our exams operations team or the examiner. For candidates who require any adjustments to their exam, or simply wish to make the examiner aware of a disability or health condition, a special needs provision form must be completed and submitted with their entry along with appropriate supporting evidence (if required). Please see [this webpage](#) for more information.

Barriers could include any of the following examples:

- *They are disabled or they have special educational needs / additional learning needs (educational context) or other specific individual requirements*

The Equality Act 2010 defines someone as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do

normal daily activities. For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

For educational contexts, the government says that a young person (age 0-25) has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. This may be if they:

- (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream education settings.

Trinity College London also acknowledges that some young people recognised as gifted or talented may have a range of special requirements not provided for in mainstream provision.

- *They live in areas of rural isolation and/or socio-economic deprivation*

Local and national government regularly collect information about communities and neighbourhoods. These *Indices of Deprivation* are used widely to analyse patterns of deprivation, identify areas that would benefit from special initiatives or programmes or funding streams. In an educational context, pupils in receipt of the Pupil Premium could be a good indicator of this. Trinity College London also recognises that some rural communities face particular challenges in enabling provision for young people or adults.

- *Are in the criminal justice system*

In terms of young people, they are part of the youth justice system if they have been referred to a Youth Offending Team, are on community orders, living in secure youth justice settings, or working as part of crime prevention programmes.

- *Are looked after, by foster carers or in residential children's homes*

Looked after young people may include those living with foster parents, at home with their parents but under the supervision of social services, in residential children's homes or other residential settings such as schools or secure units.

- *Are carers/young carers or young parents*

The NHS defines a young carer as someone aged 18 or under who helps look after a relative who has a condition, such as a disability, illness, mental health condition, or a drug or alcohol problem. The difference between young carers and other young people who help in the home is that young carers are often responsible for someone else in their family in a way that most other young people aren't. As a result of their responsibilities, young carers may experience emotional, social, financial or educational strain. A young parent is usually defined as anyone aged 25 and under who has children.

- *Are in a specific minority group (e.g. LGBTQIA+, ethnic minorities, homeless, traveller, asylum seeker, refugee)*

We recognise that minority groups face barriers for a range of reasons.

- *Are not in full-time education, employment or training/excluded from school/are in alternative education*

Young people not in education, employment or training, or alternative education such as Pupil Referral Units are recognised as a priority group. Trinity College London also recognises that some home educated children have special needs or requirements that are not being met within mainstream education. This barrier also includes adults who have been long-term unemployed (over 12 months).

- *Are hospital outpatients/inpatients or suffering long-term health problems (including mental health problems)*

People suffering long-term health problems may be at risk of low self-esteem or anxiety, or be unable to attend school, work or socialise with other people regularly.

- *Other access/inclusion issue*

If your candidate/s have another access/inclusion issue you must use the application form to explain clearly what it is for each of them.

Covid-19 pandemic

There is no denying that the Covid-19 pandemic had a profound effect upon our lives and that the impact of this will be felt for many years to come. We hope that now we have returned to something close to pre-pandemic normality, the additional pressures felt on people's physical and mental health, education and quality of life have started to ease. However, where the consequences of Covid-19 have resulted in severe and long-term obstacles for the candidates, we will take this into consideration.

Q11. Based on the categories above please tell us more about the candidate/s, including any particular needs and priorities they have. Your answer to this question will be scored.

Use this question to provide more context about the candidates you are/will be working with and their particular access and inclusion issues. With reference to the categories above, you should explain how you have identified them as having those particular access and inclusion issues, and any specific needs or challenges that they face. Please do not include any personal information about the young people.

Q12. Please tell us about your candidate's/candidates' musical/drama journey so far. Have they had lessons before? Are they new to learning an instrument or drama technique? Have they sat an exam before? How would they benefit from having the support of an Access Fund grant? Your answer to this question will be scored.

We would love to know more about your candidate/s in order to get a sense of what music/drama means to them. Please use this question to tell us about where they are in their journey and, if they were awarded an Access Fund grant, how this would support them to progress. Remember, the more detail you provide, the better understanding we will have of your application.

Q13. How are the barriers they're experiencing prohibiting them from accessing music/drama education and limiting their achievements? Your answer to this question will be scored.

We'd like to find out more about how the barriers they experience impacts their progression.

Q14. How would the Access Fund grant, and the plan for how you will spend it, fit into the wider scheme of the candidate's/candidates' music/drama education? Is this an isolated project or is it a step on the ladder of their ongoing music/drama progression? Your answer to this question will be scored.

We want to get a sense of where the Access Fund grant would fit in the context of their learning. Is this grant to introduce people to music/drama activities and cultivate an interest in the arts, or is it to support a student who is already engaged but needs support to take the next step?

Q15: What affect do you think receipt of the Access Fund will have on your own teaching practice? Do you envisage any long-term benefits? (Only teachers need to answer this question)

We'd like to know how receipt of the Access Fund grant would impact the work you do. For example, will it enable you to engage with people you haven't been able to reach before, or will it provide you with leverage to better promote Trinity exams to your students?

Plan and budget details

Q16. What specifically do your candidate/s need the Access Fund grant for?

This could include any of the following:

- To pay for the exam entry fee (please check the current list of fees for [Music](#) and [Drama](#) and note that Face-to-Face exams are a different fee to Digital exams)
- To pay for specific equipment needed to carry out the exam
- To pay towards lessons
- To pay for an accompanist in the exam
- To pay for travel to the exam venue
- To pay towards instrument hire or purchase, where appropriate
- To pay for or towards equipment hire
- To buy relevant books, music scores, scripts
- To pay for venue hire where appropriate

If your candidate/s require the Access Fund grant for something not listed above, you must use the comments section to explain clearly what it is. Your answer to this question will be scored.

Q17. Referring to the answers you've given above, please expand on this explaining why the candidate/s need them and what barriers they currently face in accessing them. Please provide a rationale for each item confirming how it will support the candidate/s to achieve their exam*. Your answer to this question will be scored.

We need to know how each item of Access Fund expenditure will enable your candidate/s to achieve a Trinity qualification and why your candidate needs financial support with this.

*In terms of the Access Fund helping a candidate to achieve an exam, this doesn't mean we will penalise them if they don't pass but their teachers should only enter them for an exam when they are ready. We cannot fund a re-take of an exam unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Q18. Please provide a budget using the template provided detailing ALL of the costs involved in your candidate/s taking their Trinity exam. Please indicate if any elements are being funded elsewhere and by whom. The maximum grant is £1,500 per group and £300 per individual. Your budget will be scored. If you do not complete the budget, or it is not accurate, your application will automatically be declined. The panel reserve the right to part fund an application. Please make sure that your budget is complete and accurate before uploading it here as you will not be able to change it after uploading.

If you're applying for a grant to cover the exam entry fee, please ensure you check the correct/current list of fees and do be aware that our fees increase annually in September. The cost of face-to-face exams is different to the cost of a Digital exam:

[Exam fees for Classical & Jazz Grades, Certificate and Diploma exams, Rock & Pop Grades and Digital Grades and Diplomas](#)

[Drama exams](#)

Please list in your budget the correct fee per candidate for the exam grade they are planning to take.

Please indicate which elements are being funded elsewhere and by whom i.e. the school, parents, the candidate themselves, a music service/hub, another funding body, etc. For example, you might only be applying for the exam entry fee for a candidate, but we'd like to know who is paying for their lessons, the accompanist (if relevant), and any other costs incurred such as the exam venue hire, travel, equipment, books, etc.

Q19. Total Access Fund amount applied for in this application (this must not exceed £1,500 for a group or £300 per individual candidate)

Please confirm the amount of funding you're applying for from the Access Fund.

FAQs

Can we apply if we are not based in the UK and Ireland?

No, the Music & Drama Access Fund is currently only available to candidates based in the UK and Ireland.

Can we apply for the money to pay ourselves back for something that has already happened?

No, grants cannot be awarded retrospectively and will not be awarded for activities that have already happened.

How will we know if our application has been successful?

You will receive an email from us 3-4 weeks after the application deadline. This email will confirm whether your application has been successful or not.

How quickly will we receive the money?

If your application is successful, the money should be with you approximately 8 weeks after the application deadline date. Money awarded for exam fees is not given out to you but held in a central fund at Trinity.

How exam fees are applied varies depending on how the exam is entered for but, in short, you will either be required to pay for the exam and notify us so that we can refund you, or you will be instructed to deduct the amount from the amount owed. Further details regarding this will be sent to you upon confirmation that your application has been successful.

How long do we have to spend the grant money?

An Access Fund grant is valid for 12 months and any money not used within this time should be returned to us to be reallocated to future rounds. Extensions to the 12-month time-frame will be considered on a case-by-case basis and only in exceptional circumstances. We understand extensions may be needed, depending on the needs and requirements of the candidate and/or the grade of exam they're working towards. If your exam fees end up costing less than what has been awarded, the excess will also be returned to the Access Fund for reallocation. Any additional fees not covered by the grant will need to be paid for by the centre. Once your candidates have sat their exams and you have their results, you must submit a grant report no later than 12 months after receiving your grant.

What happens if there is a change to the type of exam the candidate/s are taking or the exams don't go ahead?

If any element of your proposed plans change, or if the candidate no longer plans to take their Trinity exam, you must contact the Access Fund Manager to check that your grant can be used in a different way. If the candidate will not be taking their exam at all, please contact the Access Fund Manager to discuss next steps.

Will the information supplied by the applicant on the Access Fund application form about the candidate/s access/additional learning needs be shared with the exams operations team or the examiner?

No. If your Access Fund application is successful and you/the candidate come to booking the exam, the information you supply in this application about your candidate/s will not be passed onto our exams operations team or the examiner. For candidates who require any adjustments to their exam, or simply wish to make the examiner aware of a disability or health condition, a special needs provision form must be completed and submitted with their entry along with appropriate supporting evidence (if required). Please see [this webpage](#) for more information.

What happens if the number of candidates changes (for group applications)?

If the number of candidates in a group application changes after you've received the grant, please contact the Access Fund Manager. You will need to explain in your grant report how many candidates achieved their Trinity Music or Drama qualification, and outline why this was different to what you had originally applied for. If you have applied for exam fees to be covered, Trinity will only cover these for candidates who take the exam.

If any of your details or the candidate/s details change after you've submitted an application, please email the Access Fund Manager.

What happens if, having booked their exam, one or more of my Access Fund recipients becomes ill or injured and is unable to sit their exam? What should I do?

If any of your candidates are unable to take their exam after they have booked, you will need to inform the Access Fund Manager as soon as possible who will work with you to resolve this. These situations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

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If the answer to your question is not above, please contact us and we will be happy to help.

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