



Image: Jo Hayes

NORFOLK **NSM** NORWICH
FESTIVAL

BURSARIES FOR YOUNG CREATIVES 2026

Led by young people, for young people



Norfolk & Norwich Festival is delighted to announce Bursaries for Young Creatives, a youth leadership initiative for 18-25 year olds in East Anglia. Bursaries for Young Creatives will support eight young people with £2,500 each to further their cultural and community leadership abilities. Run across seven months, the programme will enable participants to develop their creative skills and contribute to the creative and cultural lives of other young people in East Anglia.

Fee:

£2,500

Closing date:

31/10/2025



Image: Luke Witcomb

Norfolk & Norwich Festival



Norfolk & Norwich Festival is a charity delivering one of the country's longest running arts festivals and a region-wide, year-round programme of creativity and culture for children, young people and their communities.

Norfolk & Norwich Festival takes place in Norwich and around Norfolk for 17 days each May. The Festival is distinctive because we collaborate with artists – from down the road and around the world – to explore the unique physical and cultural identities of our place and to make art which is meaningful to the lives of our audiences.

Festival Connect & Create is the Festival's participation initiative. We work across Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on projects that support and collaborate with educators, artists, young people and their communities.

Our vision

To lead and support celebration, creativity and curiosity in our community to make our part of the world a great place to live, learn, work and play. All of our work is informed by our 'programme principles' – our embrace of:

- **Art relevant to today**, blurring the boundaries between artforms and between art and everyday life.
- 'Festival spirit' which we bring to our work to celebrate, to share cultural experiences and to bring our community together.
- Questions and actions about a Social Responsibility with a focus on: equality, diversity and inclusion; placemaking; and environmental sustainability.

Introduction



Bursaries for Young Creatives

Norfolk & Norwich Festival's Bursaries for Young Creatives are for **individuals aged 18-25 (on 1 January 2026)** who make, or aspire to make, an impact on the creative and cultural lives of children and/or young people.

What is a Young Creative?

We believe that everyone has the right to a creative and cultural life, and as such we are focused on supporting 'Creative Leaders' – educators, artists and young creatives – who actively contribute to the creative and cultural lives of others.

We have a very broad definition of who can be a Young Creative Leader. For example, you could be an:

- Artist e.g. writer, filmmaker, ceramicist, fashion designer (all art forms welcome)
- Arts worker (or aspiring to be) e.g. assistant curator, programme assistant, junior producer
- Activist e.g. charity's young trustee, cause campaigner
- Arts or culture student or graduate
- Community representative e.g. committee member, event co-ordinator.

We define a Creative Leader as someone active in sharing their passion for arts and culture with others. Our Young Creative bursaries are about growing and empowering young creatives leaders in their community. The bursaries are designed by young people and led by young people, for young people.

Examples of Bursary Proposals

Proposals for the bursary are very broad, as we want to hear from you about what you can do in your community to benefit the creative and cultural lives of children and/or young people, living there.

- Offer your expertise to your partnership organisation as an 'agent of change' to develop their programme.
- Attend a youth-led cultural event (even outside England!) and return to your community to share what you learned
- Start and manage a 'crit club' to review theatre or literature and publish your critiques
- Develop your skills as a cultural facilitator through action learning or a structured course
- Run a series of cultural workshops or events to connect and/or upskill others.

The focus of this initiative is not on individual artistic development but on developing cultural leadership and activating others.

Partner Organisations



To support young creatives to deliver their bursaries and develop as leaders we believe it is important for the young creative to be connected with (and supported by) a partner organisation that have expertise and resources to share. Therefore, each applicant is asked to identify and apply with an organisational partner located in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, or Peterborough.

We expect your organisational partner to be a cultural organisation, such as a gallery, arts centre, or museum - but it might be that you work with a different type of organisation, such as a youth club, sports club, library, charity, university or college.

Partner organisations are not expected to provide funding for the project but are expected to offer support through in-kind resources such as venue hire, equipment, staff time, etc.

It might be the case that you are not yet connected with an organisation at all, or that there is not an appropriate organisation in your community. If this is the case, please let us know in your application form and tell us about your strategy for building a relationship.

Your organisational partner could be a

- Cultural organisation, e.g. gallery, arts centre, museums,
- Education provider e.g. school, university or college
- Community group e.g. youth club, sports club
- Local authority provider e.g. library
- Charity or other third sector organisation.



Image: Malacky Luckie

Budget & Timeline



Each bursary is worth a total of £2,500.

We expect that this will largely be spent on fees (i.e., to pay for your time) however it can also include materials, travel, venue hire, fees for collaborators and/or participants, cost of access needs, etc. Please ensure that the scale of your project is in line with the £2,500 bursary award. If successful with your application, we will work with you to compose your specific budget. At the application stage, the scale of your project needs to be viable and realistic.

The activity proposed in your application must take place in the first half of 2026. The life of your project may continue after July 2026; however, we expect your bursary to be spent in the first half of the year.

Eligibility Criteria



To be eligible to apply for a bursary you must be: **Aged 18-25 on the 1 January 2026, Living in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire or Peterborough and Committed to carrying out work in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire or Peterborough.**

Norfolk & Norwich Festival embraces questions and actions about a changing world. We particularly welcome proposals from people who are part of groups underrepresented in the arts in East Anglia, especially people from culturally or socially diverse backgrounds and/or people who identify as neurodiverse, D/deaf or disabled.

Apply as part of a larger project

We welcome applications in which our bursary support can be integrated into a larger programme of activity and included as match-funding. However, your programme of activity for the bursary must be clearly defined and not simply merged into a larger project.

Applying as a collective

Applications must be made by individuals or as a collaborative team/collective. If applying with multiple individuals, one person must be named as the lead applicant, and it is this person who must complete the application form on behalf of the group. Please note that the level of bursary will remain at £2,500.

Policy on Previous Bursary Recipients

If you have previously received a Bursary for Artist or a Bursary for Young Creatives, you are welcome to apply again with a new or further-developed project. You can find out about past recipients' projects [here](#).

Selection Criteria



Selection Criteria

Our selection criteria are:

- The creativity and originality of your proposal
- The contribution your proposal makes to the creative lives of children and/or young people in East Anglia
- The viability of your proposal
- Skill and experience of the applicant.

Where possible, we will select project proposals which also:

- Provide geographical representation
- Provide a range of artform practices
- Provide a diverse and different cohort
- Impact on sector learning and practice

Selection Panel

The selection panel will be made up of Norfolk & Norwich Festival staff and a representative from Norfolk & Norwich Festival's FLOCK Codirectors.

*FLOCK is Norfolk & Norwich Festival's network for young creatives (aged 18-25) based in East Anglia, that is programmed and delivered by a peer collective of six FLOCK Codirectors. You can find out more about FLOCK and sign up for free [here](#).



Image: Malacky Luckie

Timelines



Application Timeline

- 1 September 2025: Bursary programme announced and applications open
- 7 & 14 October 2025: Online Q&A sessions for prospective applicants
- 31 October 2025: Deadline for applications
- 30 November 2025: All applicants notified.

Q&A

We are hosting two virtual information sessions for potential applicants. These will be open and informal online events where you can ask members of the Norfolk & Norwich Festival team any questions about the programme and your potential application.

The information sessions are to be held on:

- Tuesday 7 October 6 – 7pm
- Tuesday 14 October: 1 – 2pm.

Book a place on one of the information sessions [here](#)

Bursary Recipient Timeline

- December 2025: Young creative bursary 1-to-1 induction meeting, partner organisation invited (virtual – 45 minutes)
- January 2026: Safeguarding induction session (virtual – 45 minutes)
- January – July 2026: Monthly young creative bursary check-in meetings (virtual – 30 minutes)
- February 2026: Bursary for young creatives cohort session (in-person – 2.5 hours)
- April 2026: Bursaries for artists and bursaries for young creatives joint cohort session (in-person – 2.5 hours)
- July 2026: Bursaries for young creatives cohort session (In-person 2.5 hours).



How to apply

To apply complete an Application Form and applicants are also asked to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring form ([linked here](#)) which is kept anonymous and only used for data reporting purposes. Send your completed application form to fcc@nnfestival.org.uk by 12 noon on Friday 31 October 2025. Please put 'Bursaries for Young Creatives Application' in the subject line.

Deadline

12 noon, 31 October 2025

Queries

If you have any questions about the bursary, require the forms in large print or would like a paper copy posting to you, please contact fcc@nnfestival.org.uk



Image: Press Association