LibraryOn Grants programme application guidance: Round 2

Welcome to the LibraryOn Grants: Round 2, and thank you for your interest. This guidance document will take you through the aims of the fund, the application process and how to apply.

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Introduction to the British Library

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom. We work closely with public libraries, and as a national library we have been awarded £3.4m of capital funding from Arts Council England to develop a new national digital platform, known as LibraryOn, and to provide local grants.

Introduction to LibraryOn

This programme of work celebrates everything public libraries have to offer and aims to increase the number of people who use them both online and in person. LibraryOn will connect people with libraries by enhancing the online presence and discoverability to users. The LibraryOn delivery team is based at the British Library in London and Boston Spa.

What is the grant programme and how is it funded?

This is a second round of the grants programme that we are running to complement the national LibraryOn platform and to support public libraries develop their own online presence. In the first round, we awarded just under £1.09m to 27 projects delivered by 24 library services. In this round, we have up to £500,000 available for capital projects that can be delivered swiftly and focus on a specific area of delivery. Project ideas submitted to the first round have helped us identify the types of capital activity that would benefit from funding.

We strongly recommend you only apply to this fund if you are confident of being able to deliver your proposed activity. The nature of this fund means projects need to be delivered rapidly with the award drawn down and spent within the published timeframe. Applicants unable to do so may be at risk of having to return any unused or unallocated funds.

The programme is supported through capital funding from Arts Council England.

Aims of grant programme

- To improve the online presence of libraries through improvements made to their digital infrastructure.
- To improve the digital capability of libraries, making it easier for them to engage with their users.
- To enhance online discoverability by making it easier for existing or new customers to find, access, and engage with libraries.
- To support library services to make improvements to their digital presence by investing in one of the following areas:

    - Library apps
    - Online registration
    - Virtual tours
    - Upgrades or improvements to Library Management Systems (LMS)

How much funding is available?

We have up to £500,000 that will be available over one funding round. We expect to make between 15 and 20 awards of between £10,000 and £30,000.

What are the timescales?

Due to the short delivery period on this fund, we particularly welcome projects that are 'ready to go' or have been reasonably scoped out at the point of application and ready to deliver activity within the set timescales. Successful applicants will have up to four months (excluding Christmas holidays) to deliver their projects between November and March 2024.

The programme launches and the application window is open for 4 weeks.	Wednesday 4th October
Deadline to submit an application.	9am on Wednesday 1st November
Decisions announced for applications.	By Friday 17th November
Final completion date for project activity.	9am on Monday 18th March 2024
Deadline to submit final monitoring/evaluation documents and financial reporting.	9am on Friday 29th March 2024

Eligibility

This is a capital grants programme, which means that all expenditure must be capitalised on the applicants' balance sheet. We can cover 100% of the project costs. However, if some of your planned expenditure is not capital it can be supported from other confirmed sources of funding which you must tell us about in the budget section of the full application. Please note that any additional funding must be confirmed at the point of submitting a full application.

Applicants can submit up to two applications and in addition, can also be part of a consortium bid.

Who can apply

- Local authority-operated library services.
- Trusts, mutual and charities commissioned by local authorities to deliver library services.
- Consortia of library services. You must identify a lead service within your application. (Given the quick delivery period it is likely only existing consortia will have the capacity to apply)
- Archives that operate as part of a statutory library service.
- Applicants that were unsuccessful in the first funding round either at the Expression of Interest or Full Application stage. Applications can be for an improved bid for the same activity providing it falls within the four areas or a new activity within the four areas.
- Applicants in receipt of LibraryOn grant funding from the first round.

Who can't apply

- Libraries that are not part of a local authority offer*
- Individual branch libraries.
- Academic, voluntary or private libraries.

*Community Managed Libraries cannot apply in their own right; however, they can form part of a consortium where the lead applicant is a local authority offer (direct or commissioned).

What you can apply for

Given the quick turnaround, we expect to receive applications for activities that are ready to be delivered as soon as funding is confirmed. We anticipate this could include projects that have already been partially or fully scoped and now need investment, or form a bespoke part of a larger project which you haven't managed to secure funding for.

Projects should focus on improving the online presence and discoverability of libraries, making it easier for the public to discover, access and benefit from library services. We expect to fund a mix of projects under the following four categories:

Library apps

- To increase on-line access to your service offer, such as digital membership, access to catalogues, library cards, or room bookings.

Online registration platform

- To enable people to join the library through on-line registration.
- To enable people to register on-line for events.

Virtual tours

- To create virtual tours of your library spaces to enhance accessibility.

Upgrades or improvements to Library Management Systems (LMS)

- To purchase additional modules for your LMS to expand your digital offering.

What you can't apply for

- Activity which doesn't fall into one of the above four categories.
- Activity that has already taken place.
- Activity which can't be delivered within the published timeframe.
- Standalone staffing costs not directly related to project delivery.
- Costs associated with researching or developing a capital asset.
- Feasibility studies.
- Purchase of e-books or e-stock.
- Any activity covered by the grant that is not able to be capitalised on your organisation's balance sheet*
- Funding for projects which seek to replace core activity covered by local authority funding.

* Unless this aspect of the activity is resourced by other funding confirmed at the point of application

How to apply

We are administering this fund through an online application platform. Your application must be made using this system and we will use it to communicate with you during the process. Before applying, you need to create a user profile on the portal. You can access the portal here https://webportalapp.com/sp/libraryon-grants-r2 or by visiting the grants pages of the LibraryOn website.

If you have already created a user profile for the previous funding round, you can use the same login details for this application. Please check your details are still correct on the profile form when you first log in.

Our terms and conditions and a draft funding agreement are available on our website. We recommend you take a look at these during the application process to satisfy yourself that they can be met should funding be awarded.

If you have any access requirements, please contact us before making your application by emailing hello@libraryon.org

Submitting an application

Once you've created a user profile the system will give you access to the application questions (see below). The portal will open on Wednesday 4th October and will close 4 weeks later at 9am on Wednesday 1st November.

What needs to be included

We will ask for details on who is applying and how much you intend to apply for. We will ask you to confirm that expenditure can be capitalised on the balance sheet. You need to select which activity you are applying for. There are three questions to complete which require narrative answers. These are:

- A detailed summary of your project (up to 300 words)
- How does your project meet the aims of the LibraryOn grant programme? (up to 400 words)
- What's your timeframe for delivering the project and how will you ensure it is completed within the deadline for this fund? (up to 300 words)

We will ask you about the budget and how you will spend the grant money. Any costs you include must be capitalisable on your organisation's balance sheet, in line with your own accounting policies. Only costs related to the development/ purchasing of the asset can be capitalised, not initial research/ planning or running costs. If there are non-capital costs as part of your project these must be covered by income or in-kind support from other sources confirmed at the point of submitting your application.

We will ask for a budget breakdown against the following headings:

- Subscriptions and/or software costs (you can include costs covering up to 12 months)
- Internal staff working directly on the creation of the asset
- External professional services used to directly create the asset
- Asset purchases
- Other capital costs
- Other costs (if applicable and covered by other confirmed income)

You will also need to complete and upload the template from your finance team which is available as an appendix at the end of this guidance document.

How a decision is made

We will use the answers in your application to decide on a score against our published criteria. We will also consider factors such as variety of different types of projects, the geographic spread of services, type of library authority, and the mix of urban and rural libraries when deciding which projects to fund.

Decision criteria

The decision-making criteria are based on the questions we ask in the application. Panel members will use a RAG (red/amber/green) rating to score your project against the following questions:

- Does the project make it easier for new and existing library users to find, access, and engage with the library? [Red/Amber/Green]
- Does the project offer value for money and is deliverable within the timescale? [Red/Amber/Green]
- Whether they recommend the project for funding [Yes/No]

Who is on the decision-making panel

The panel will be made up of LibraryOn team members and a library sector specialist. An Arts Council England representative may also attend as an observer.

What happens next

If you are unsuccessful

You'll receive a brief feedback statement which will include a standard reason why funding hasn't been awarded. The reasons include:

- Didn't meet the criteria
- Competition for funds
- Other applications preferred

If you are successful

You'll receive an offer letter and funding agreement which will allow you to accept the grant. We will also ask you to acknowledge and accept our terms and conditions.

We will ask for your bank details. Payments are split into two instalments with 80% of the grant released at the start of the project and the final 20% released when you submit your final monitoring report at the end of the activity.

You must acknowledge your award on all online resources and any printed or published material relating to the grant activity. This includes using the LibraryOn and Arts Council England logos. Details on how to use these are included as an appendix at the end of this guidance.

How to draw down payments

We will email you the offer letter and funding agreement via DocuSign. This will go to the contact named in your application who is authorised to sign the agreement. You will also receive the email (if the authorised contact is different to the main contact).

The funding agreement should be electronically signed as soon as possible after receiving it. Instructions will be included in the email about how to sign. Once you've signed, the agreement is automatically sent back to us for our signature to be added. We will then add the funding agreement to the portal from our side. The agreement will be visible for you to view in the portal, and you will also receive a copy once we have signed.

We will ask for your bank details. The bank details form will be available to download from the portal. We will also ask for evidence of your bank account, which could be a redacted bank statement or a blank paying-in slip or check. You must complete the bank details form then upload it to the portal along with your bank account evidence.

You will be responsible for ring-fencing the funds you receive in an appropriate way.

In order to receive the final payment, you must complete and submit the final monitoring information on the online application platform.

Monitoring requirements

At the end of the project, we will ask you to complete a simple final monitoring report. Details of what we will ask are included as an appendix at the end of this guidance. The questions cover what you have achieved, challenges, what you have learnt, how the activity has contributed towards the digital capacity of your service, how it has enhanced online discoverability and access for users and details of any partnership developments (if applicable). We will also ask for details on your final income and expenditure and project accounts.

Community of practice

Through our first grants round, we have established a Community of Practice for projects to learn from one another and help support learning. This includes monthly sessions where

applicants come together on-line to share learning and expertise. The programme includes sessions from digital experts on topics selected by applicants. The group uses Basecamp to share ideas, exchange information and chat about projects. The expert sessions and Basecamp are also open to anyone from the library sector.

Applicants are warmly invited to take part in the Community of Practice, although this is optional for round two grantees as we realise the delivery period for the activity is short.

We may also ask applicants to be part of a peer group to help evaluate activity for up to 12 months after projects have been completed. We recognise that the full benefit may not be understood until sometime after the activity has ended, and we are interested in capturing longer-term sector impact. We will be looking at the impact on individual services and the wider library sector.

Complaints
If you have concerns about the process or feel you want to make a complaint, we will respond to you swiftly and follow our complaints procedure. We don't have an appeals process for grant decisions, however if you feel you have been treated unfairly or we haven't followed our procedures correctly, you can email our Digital Grants Manager on jill.brown@bl.uk or contact hello@libraryon.org

Other sources of funding

National Lottery Project Grants
Arts Council England supports arts and cultural activity through its open access funding scheme, National Lottery Project Grants.

It may also be useful to refer to the library information sheet available on Arts Council England's website.

Heritage Fund
Funded through the National Lottery, the Heritage Fund supports projects related to 'the past that you value and want to pass onto future generations'. For libraries this could be about making collections more accessible and/or engaging people with interpreting new and existing collections.

National Lottery Community Fund
This fund has several different strands which focus on supporting work with and for communities. Read through the open programmes to find out more.

Resources
CILIP has produced an online learning course for digital leadership in libraries which may be helpful in planning project ideas.

Digital Leadership for Libraries (cilip.org.uk)

Arts Council England's Digital Culture Network provides free resources and training opportunities across a range of technologies. They also produce a monthly newsletter and offer free 1-2-1 sessions with their Tech Champions who are experts in all things digital.
Digital Skills For Arts & Culture - Digital Culture Network

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions about your application.
Email us on hello@libraryon.org
Our website is LibraryOn - Grants programme

Appendices

- Template for finance teams to complete
- Profile form and application templates
- Terms and conditions and draft funding agreement
- Branding and logo guidance
- Final report template

Template for finance teams

Template for finance teams to confirm expenditure can be capitalised.

Please complete and sign the below declaration to confirm your finance team is aware of the project and is able to capitalise expenditure on the balance sheet.

The finance team agree that the expenditure detailed in this LibraryOn grant application can be capitalised on our balance sheet.

Signed [Finance officer]……

Name……

Library service…….

Date……

Profile form and applications template



*The information below is for your reference, please input answers into the application portal available at libraryon.org/grants.

Profile form

First name:	
Last name:	
Job title:	
Email address:	
Postal address:	
Library service:	

Application form

Library service:	
If applying as a consortium, please input the name of the library service you have chosen to be the lead applicant and	

the names of the other services	

First name:	

Last name:	

Job title:	

Email address:	

Postal address:	

Name, job title and email address for contact authorised to sign the grant agreement if funding is awarded:	
If the same as above please leave blank.	

What is the registered legal address?	
If the same as above please leave blank.	

What is the legal name of your organisation?	

What name is your bank account registered in?	

Are you applying as a consortium?	Yes No

If yes, please provide the names of the other services and contact names:	

Name of your project: *Please add a short project title for identification purposes.*	

Please give a brief outline of your project: *Maximum 100 words*	
This will be published on the LibraryOn website if funding is awarded.	

How much are you applying for? *Applications can be for between £10,000 and £30,000*	

Please provide a start and end date for your project:	
Projects cannot exceed three months in length and delivery should be complete by Monday 12th February 2024.	

Please select which activity you are applying for:	Library apps	
	Online registration platform	
	Virtual tours	
	Upgrades or improvements to LMS systems	

Please provide a detailed summary of your project activity *Maximum 300 words*	

How does your project meet the aims of the LibraryOn grant programme? *Maximum 400 words*	

What's your timeframe for delivering the project and how will you ensure it is completed within the deadline for this fund? *Maximum 300 words*	

Type of expenditure	Expenditure detail
Software or subscription costs (you can include costs covering up to 12 months)	
Internal staff working directly on the creation of the asset	
External professional services used to directly create the asset	
Asset purchases e.g. hardware	
Other capital costs	
Other costs (if applicable and covered by other confirmed income)	
We can fund 100% of the project. However, you are welcome to cover elements of the project with funding from elsewhere. For example, if some of your planned expenditure is not capital it can be supported from other sources. If any activity is covered from other sources, please indicate which elements of expenditure this will be allocated towards.	

How have you worked out the above figures? Please provide detail for each heading. *Maximum 400 words*	

I confirm that I have discussed the project activity with the finance team to ensure it and any procurement processes can be delivered within the published timeframe; and the finance team confirms that the expenditure can be capitalised on the balance sheet.	

Please complete and upload the template from the guidance document confirming your finance team is aware of the project and is able to capitalise any expenditure on the balance sheet.

Declaration

I confirm that:

- I have read the guidance for applicants and additional information.
- To the best of my knowledge, the details provided in this application are accurate.
- Expenditure can be capitalised on the balance sheet if funding is awarded.

Name:	

Terms and conditions and draft funding agreement

To be added, although available on request.

Branding and logo guidance

The LibraryOn grants programme is managed by the British Library and funded by Arts Council England using public money. To celebrate funding projects like these for public libraries we want to let people how your project has been supported. The Arts Council England and LibraryOn logos, should, therefore, be applied to all public-facing materials you create to promote your new digital presence including websites, films and any other media or assets you may create to talk about your new resource. You can download the logos here: Arts Council England LibraryOn. The following guidelines will help you ensure the logos have been used correctly. If you cannot apply the logos because space is restricted please use

this text credit: ‘Supported by LibraryOn using public funding by Arts Council England’. If you need help or you have any queries on this guidance please contact us at: hello@libraryon.org

Links to be added, although available on request.

Final report template

Final report template

Reporting must be completed online using our online application platform. You may find it easier to complete this template first, then cut and paste your answers into the system.

What have you achieved and what progress on activity have you made?
Up to 400 words

What have been the challenges? Up to 300 words

What have you learnt? Up to 300 words

How is the project contributing to the digital capability and/or provision by your service? Up to 400 words

How has the project contributed to enhancing online discoverability and access for users? Up to 400 words

If applicable, have there been any partnership developments? Up to 200 words

How many people that work in your service have been engaged in and/or have benefitted from this project? Please feel free to provide detail explaining how this figure has been calculated.

If known, please provide figures for current service user engagement:	
On-line	
In-person	
Please feel free to provide any additional information about the above figures.	

If known, please provide figures for how many service users have engaged with your project:

On-line	
In-person	
Please feel free to provide any additional information about the above figures.	

Income for this activity

	Original income	Final income	Income notes
Grant programme award	£	£	
If applicable, any other income received for this project	£	£	

Expenditure for this activity

	Original expenditure	Final expenditure	Expenditure notes
Subscription and/or software costs (up to 12 months)	£	£	
Internal staff working directly on the creation of the asset	£	£	
External professional services used to directly create the asset	£	£	
Asset purchases e.g. hardware	£	£	
Other capital costs	£	£	
If applicable, other costs	£	£	

I confirm that expenditure for this organisation's balance sheet (Please ☐ check the box) project has been capitalised on our

Your feedback is important to the LibraryOn team. Please let us know how we did.
Thinking about the grant you have received from us, how did we:

A. explain about eligibility to apply for funding?

Very well	
Well	
Neither well nor badly	
Badly	
Very badly	

B. explain the application process?

Very well	
Well	
Neither well nor badly	
Badly	
Very badly	

C. manage your application for funding?

Very well	
Well	
Neither well nor badly	
Badly	
Very badly	

D. respond if you contacted us for advice or information?

Very well	
Well	
Neither well nor badly	
Badly	
Very badly	

Please let us know if you have any other comments