



Audience development and marketing

This information sheet is for prospective applicants to the Grants for the arts programme, who will be applying from 1 July 2013. Please also read our 'How to apply guidance' before you submit your application. Download it from our website or contact us for a copy (0845 300 6200, enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk). This information sheet complements the 'How to apply guidance', but does not replace it.

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1 Why are audience development and marketing important?

If you want others to know about the work you are doing, and if you want people to take part in or attend your activity, then marketing and audience development will be important.

2 What is marketing?

Marketing is the process of communicating the value of a product or service to customers or audiences. A good marketing plan will allow you to meet your goals and the needs of audiences. It encourages you to consider the audience perspective as you plan your activity. You should look at things like choice of activity, where and when the activity will take place, possible costs for the audience, and methods of involving and communicating with potential audiences and participants.

3 What is audience development?

Audience development is based on the same principles as marketing, but it is about increasing the range of audiences not just increasing the numbers of attendees. By understanding and knowing your existing and potential audience, you can develop a relationship with them and communicate effectively with them. Arts Council England uses the following definition:

‘The term audience development describes activity which is undertaken specifically to meet the needs of existing and potential audiences and to help arts organisations to develop ongoing relationships with audiences. It can include aspects of marketing, commissioning, programming, education, customer care and distribution.’

‘Audience’ includes attendees, visitors, readers, listeners, viewers, participants, learners and people who purchase works of art.

4 Why do you need a plan?

Having an audience development or marketing plan will help you to focus on who you want to reach and how you will reach them. It will help to identify how much it will cost to put your plans into action. Within the plan you can develop ways of serving existing audiences, finding new ones, earning income and seeking new opportunities and partnerships. Your plan should reflect the overall nature of your work or the work of your organisation. A plan does not have to be complicated or lengthy.

5 Some questions to get you started

Before writing your plan you could begin by asking yourself some questions. The answers to these questions can be developed into sections of your audience development and marketing plan. Some of these questions may not be relevant to you.

- what services do you provide?
- who are your present audience or attendees? How do you reach them?
- do you have new activities you want to do? Who do you want to reach with these new activities? What do you think the potential demand is?
- have you asked for the views of your customers? If so what did you find out?
- if you have staff, do they have enough time to focus on the needs of audiences?
- what marketing and audience development work have you undertaken in the past? How successful was it?
- what ideas do you have for new audience development and marketing?
- have you carried out any evaluation work that could help with your plan?
- are there other people you could learn from, for example people who have experience of doing similar things?
- what other sources of income do you have?
- if you have financial targets, are you meeting them?
- if you sell tickets, how many are you selling and to whom?
- what are your prices? How have they changed over the last few years?

- do you have a marketing or audience development budget? Is it adequate?
- what additional money will you need to put your new ideas into place? Where will the money come from?
- who are your main competitors and how do they compare with you?
- what influences might affect your activity, such as social or economic issues nationally or locally?
- what are your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats? (This is known as a SWOT analysis.)

6 Writing your audience development and marketing plan

There are no set rules about what you should include in your audience development and marketing plan, or how long it should be. The length and level of detail will depend on how ambitious your plans are and how much they will cost. This section provides information on the main headings you should include in your plan.

1 Background information on you and your current activities

Briefly describe what you currently do, and explain why you have decided that you need to do the audience development and marketing activity that you are asking us to fund.

2 Your objectives

Clearly set out the objectives and targets for your audience development or marketing activities. Make them smart (SMART) – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely.

3 The details of your activity

Describe the target audience or participants for the activity (be specific, identify each ‘audience type’, for example students aged 18–24). Provide details of how many people you are hoping to involve (be specific and break this down by each ‘audience type’). Describe the benefits and why it would appeal to them. Describe what is unique or different about your activity and plans.

4 Demand for your activity

Describe how you know that there is demand for your activity from your target audience, and provide details of any research you have carried out.

5 Audience development and marketing methods

Describe the tools, approaches and methods you plan to use to reach your target group.

6 Timetable

Provide details of the timetable for your activities, give exact dates if possible.

7 Budget

Provide details of the income and expenditure for your audience development and marketing plan, and remember to include the costs of evaluating your plans. Where possible break down the figures to show the detail of the budget.

8 Evaluation

Describe how you will evaluate the success of your plan against your objectives and targets. For example, how you will find out if you have reached the people you wanted to reach. Include information on when you will do this and who will be involved.

7 Further information

Arts Marketing Association

7a Clifton Court

Clifton Road

Cambridge

CB1 7BN

Website: www.a-m-a.co.uk

The professional development body for those promoting the arts and cultural industries.

The Chartered Institute of Marketing

Moor Hall

Cookham

Maidenhead

Berkshire

SL6 9QH

Website: www.cim.co.uk

The professional development body for those working in the marketing industry.

Econsultancy

www.econsultancy.com/uk

Digital marketing website

7.1 Marketing and audience development agencies in England

The agencies offer coordinated marketing resources at a local, regional and national level.

They are committed to working closely with other arts organisations, particularly on strategic planning for audience development.

- All About Audiences - www.allaboutaudiences.com
- &Co - www.andco.uk.com
- Now the Audience Agency www.theaudienceagency.org
- Audiences Northern Ireland - www.audiencesni.com
- Audiences Wales - www.audienceswales.co.uk
- Cultivate - www.cultivate-em.com
- Culture Sparks - www.culturesparks.co.uk
- The Audience Business (TAB) - www.tab.org.uk

7.2 Other useful contacts

Voluntary Arts Network

121 Cathedral Road

Pontcanna

Cardiff

CF11 9PH

Website: www.voluntaryarts.org

Voluntary Arts Network aims to promote participation in the arts and crafts across the UK and the Republic of Ireland, and increasingly in Europe.

7.3 Further reading

[*Arts audiences: Insight Arts Council England 2011*](#)

[*Bringing data segmentation to life A case study by Arts Council England 2012*](#)

www.artsambassadorresource.com

8 Contact us

Phone: 0845 300 6200

Email: enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk

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