



## The Ragdoll Foundation Open Grants Scheme

### Guidance for Applicants: Main Grants Programme

These guidance notes are for the **Main Grants Programme**: applications between £1,500 and £50,000 for projects lasting up to 3 years.

**For grants up to £1,500 please read the separate notes for our Small Grants Programme.**

#### 1. The purpose of the Ragdoll Foundation

The Ragdoll Foundation is dedicated to supporting the creation, appreciation and awareness of imaginative and innovative work that reflects the world from a child's point of view. Our primary purpose is to make grants for charitable purposes that:

- Demonstrate how the concerns of children can be heard
- Evidence the power of arts and creativity and their transformative power for children and young people
- Promote children's development through their imaginative thinking
- Encourage innovative thinking and influence good practice elsewhere
- Ensure effective evaluation of projects to promote sharing and learning

#### **We direct our resources and funding through three programme strands:**

- **Advocacy** – initiatives that support the voice and rights of children and young people
- **Legacy** – supporting projects that continue the work and vision of Anne Wood, founder of the Foundation
- **Open Grants Scheme** – Supporting organisations working with children and young people through the arts and creative media. We accept applications for funding through the Open Grants Scheme only. There are two programmes in the Scheme:
  - **Open Grants – Small Grants Programme:** Small, one-off projects, pilot projects, or research and development to inform a new project or programme
  - **Open Grants – Main Grants Programme:** New, larger or longer-term projects, or a significant development in the scope or scale of an existing programme, project or pilot

## **2. Open Grants Scheme – General notes**

The Ragdoll Foundation's Open Grants Scheme supports the UK cultural sector's work with children and young people. Our vision is to support projects where the concerns of childhood can be heard. All applications are expected to contribute to the Ragdoll Foundation's primary purpose.

Proposals are invited from organisations developing creative and innovative approaches to engage children and young people using the arts and creative media. In most cases applicants will be an arts organisation, however we also accept applications from other organisations working with art and artists within their project.

We are interested in projects that will capture and develop the imagination of, and directly involve children and young people, and allow their voices to be heard. Your project should place children and young people at the heart of the creative process.

### **Your application will need to demonstrate briefly how you will:**

- Capture and develop the imagination of children and young people up to 18 years old (up to 25 years, if SEND), through interaction with the arts
- Allow the voices of children and young people to be heard
- Apply creative and innovative approaches to benefit children young people directly
- Strive to improve equality of opportunity for children and young people
- Deliver a high quality experience for project participants
- Evaluate your project and share your learning from it

### **The Ragdoll Foundation gives priority to innovative, arts-based projects that:**

- Share the same values of imagination and creativity as the Ragdoll Foundation, in particular, projects which have a deep commitment to listening to children and young people and allow their perceptions and feelings to be better understood
- Take place outside of London
- Are of strategic value for the organisation
- Include high quality evaluation and sharing of project outcomes
- Have the potential to become models of good practice within the sector

### **3. Who can apply for funding?**

The Ragdoll Foundation accepts applications from **not-for-profit organisations based in the UK**. We will only fund work that is legally charitable. Organisations that are not registered charities will need to provide a copy of their constitution showing charitable or social purpose. As our focus is on funding work that actively involves children and young people all applicants must have a Safeguarding / Child Protection policy that is regularly reviewed, and be able to demonstrate that adequate processes are in place to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people.

### **4. Which strand of the Open Grants Scheme is right for my organisation?**

<b>Small Grants Programme</b>	<b>Main Grants Programme</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small, one-off projects, pilot projects, or research &amp; development to inform a new project or programme or work</li><li>• For newer or smaller organisations – this programme is not aimed at arts organisations that receive core support from one of the UK arts councils</li><li>• Short duration – up to 6 months</li><li>• One-stage application process with decisions up to 5 times a year</li><li>• Application to decision takes 6 weeks from deadline</li><li>• Maximum grant available £1,500 for projects costing up to £2,000</li><li>• No match funding required</li><li>• Up to 20 Small Grants awarded per year</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New, larger projects, or a significant development in the scope or scale of an existing programme, project or pilot</li><li>• For organisations that can demonstrate a sound track-record of project delivery and financial management, including those that receive core support</li><li>• Project duration up to 3 years</li><li>• Two-stage application process with decisions 3 times a year</li><li>• Application to decision takes up to 7 months from receipt of application</li><li>• Maximum grant £50k (for 3-year project); most grants are £5-20k</li><li>• Minimum 20% match-funding required</li><li>• 15-20 Open Grants awarded per year</li></ul>

## **5. What we do not fund**

***Please read carefully as we don't want organisations to spend time applying for projects that are not eligible for Ragdoll Foundation support.***

The Ragdoll Foundation does not fund:

- Individuals, or proposals that only benefit one individual
- Organisations that do not have a formal constitution
- Organisations or activities that are for profit
- Proposals from organisations based outside of the UK
- Local authorities and other statutory bodies
- Formal education institutions (both state and private) as applicants, including 'friends of' school groups
- Activity that is not legally charitable
- General circulars or fundraising appeals
- Capital costs (including property, building renovations and equipment costs)
- Websites, apps, resources, publications or seminars, unless part of a wider proposal
- Academic research, scholarships, bursaries, or any kind of student fees
- Training courses or qualifications (including informal qualifications such as Arts Award or Duke of Edinburgh's Award)
- Overseas travel or residential courses
- Organisational operational or staff costs (other than a small percentage – see section 6 below)
- Regular, ongoing, continuing or core projects and programmes
- Retrospective funding: any costs incurred before we make our funding decision
- Retrospective funding: funding for projects that have already started or are fully committed to at the time of making the application, OR projects that will begin or must be fully committed to before we make our funding decision
- Projects which effectively replace school provision
- Projects which include competitions or prizes
- Projects which have largely therapeutic aims
- Projects that seek to promote religious views
- Animal welfare or medical research
- Resubmissions of projects that have previously been unsuccessful in securing Ragdoll Foundation funding

## **6. Main Grants Programme – How much can I apply for & what elements will the Ragdoll Foundation Support?**

Applications are considered for both one-off short-term projects and for projects lasting up to three years. Applicants can apply for grants between £1,500 and £50,000. The higher level of funding is maximum available for multi-year grants; most of our awards are between £5,000 and £20,000.

We will support the costs an organisation incurs in delivering a particular **time-limited project**. This could include research and development, piloting a new idea, or a significant development in the scope or scale of an existing programme, project or previous pilot. Depending on the nature of your proposal, we will consider applications that include a small contribution to core costs or existing staff posts **specific to project delivery**.

We are interested in proposals where funding from the Ragdoll Foundation **will make a considerable impact**. We would expect to fund between 30%-80% of your total project costs, and would only fund above or below this range in rare circumstances. Match funding needs to be in place before any grant is paid.

## **7. Main Grants Programme – Application Process & Timing**

The Main Grants Programme operates a two-stage application process, with a rolling deadline. Stage one applications are considered in the order they are received. You can therefore submit your application at any time. Once you have submitted your application you will receive an acknowledgement by email within 15 working days. If you do not hear from us within this time, please contact us to check we have received your application. We will let you know the outcome of your stage one application within 8-12 weeks of acknowledgement.

In most cases the decision to invite a stage two submission will be made outside of a trustees' meeting. Trustees consider stage two applications at three meetings each year: in February, June and October. Depending on when your application is received it can take between four and seven months from submitting a stage one application to being considered by the trustees at stage two.

### **Whilst we cannot give definite dates for considering stage two applications, in general:**

- Stage one applications submitted between December and March should be for projects where delivery begins no earlier than September of the same year (June decision).
- Stage one applications submitted between April and July should be for projects where delivery begins no earlier than January of the following year (October decision).
- Stage one applications submitted between August and November should be for projects where delivery begins no earlier than April of the following year (February decision).

**Please note, these are not firm deadlines** – the timeframe depends on volume of applications received and we may close a round early if we receive a higher number of applications than we can assess. Please therefore submit your application as early as possible before your project start date, bearing the above guidelines in mind. By 'project

start date' we mean the point at which you need to start committing resources to the project – for example advertising for / contracting artists, booking venues, or drafting marketing material. Project activity delivery will almost always begin later.

If your application is selected to go to a **second stage review** we will ask for more detailed information to assist us in assessing your application including:

- Further details about your project including a clear timeline / project plan, evaluation and dissemination plans, and answers to specific questions we might ask
- A copy of your constitution (for organisations that are not registered charities)
- A copy of your Annual Accounts for the previous financial year and your current management accounts
- A copy of your Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy

In some circumstances, such as a particularly large grant request or a project of strategic importance to the Trustees, you might be invited to present to the Trustees at their meeting. In this case, we will cover reasonable travel expenses.

Successful applicants will be contacted within 10 working days of the Trustees' meeting. If your application is unsuccessful we will provide short written feedback. Please note, if your application is unsuccessful you cannot reapply for the same project at a later date.

## **8. Main Grants Programme – What to do next**

If you have read these guidance notes and feel that both your organisation and proposed project fit the Ragdoll Foundation's criteria, please download, save, and complete the **Main Grants Application Form** from our website. ***Please note, this is NOT an online form – you must download and save it to your desktop (not phone or tablet). Please send the actual PDF that you complete and not a scan or screenshot of the form. (You will know it is the right version because you will be able to tick and untick the boxes on the first page.)***

The form will ask you for organisational information, a project summary and outline budget. Applications are only accepted by email and should be sent as an attachment to [applications@ragdollfoundation.org.uk](mailto:applications@ragdollfoundation.org.uk). Please note, we are a small foundation and seek to keep our administrative costs to a minimum in order to concentrate our resources on grant giving. We therefore cannot give detailed pre-application advice. The best way for us to understand what you are aiming to achieve with our funding is to read your first stage application. If we are interested in your project, we will invite you to submit further information through our second stage application process.

**Thank you for your interest in the Ragdoll Foundation. If you have any comments about these guidance notes or the application process in general please email:**

[info@ragdollfoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@ragdollfoundation.org.uk).