

Venue Upgrade Grants 2024/2025

Program 1



Venues who demonstrate a commitment to increasing live music programming may apply for grants to support advice from consultants and experts to create fit-for-purpose venues e.g. reports, applications, planning expenses, legal services, audits.

Key Information

- **Status:** Opening soon
- **Grant amount:** Up to \$20,000 (ex GST) per grant application
- **Application opens:** 13 January 2025
- **Application closes:** 17 March 2025 3:00 pm

Program objective

Grants are to support advice from consultants and experts to create fit-for-purpose venues.

This funding aims to:

- Increase the number of fit-for-purpose live music venues in NSW
- Increase sector knowledge and expertise in best practice sound management and sustainable live music programming
- Reduce sound impact on neighbours, leading to less complaints and increased business viability
- Increase diversity of live music offerings for improved audience and visitor experience.

The grants are funded and administered by Sound NSW.

Eligibility

Who can apply

This funding program is open to NSW contemporary live music venue owners and operators who demonstrate a commitment to increasing live music programming.

Applicants must satisfy ONE of the following criteria:

- be an incorporated entity or trust (including a trust with a corporate or individual trustee) and hold an Australian Business Number (ABN), Australian Company Number (ACN)
- be registered with NSW Fair Trading under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 or the Co-operatives National Law (NSW) set out in the appendix to the Co-operatives (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012

Applicants must also:

- hold a lease or occupancy agreement with at least 2 years from the application close date remaining of the current term (where the premises aren't owned by the operator).
- provide a support letter from premises (building) owner for proposed grant where premises not owned by the applicant
- hold a OneMusic licence

For the purpose of this program, a contemporary live music venue refers to a venue that:

- is licensed or unlicensed
- has a room or space dedicated to live music that is a significant part (eg. more than 50%) of the venue and contains appropriate infrastructure to support regular performances, for example, a separate auditorium, lighting, a sound desk, etc
- has formal arrangements in place establishing payments for artist performances
- has ongoing and regular live music programming
- programs artists and acts performing new and original contemporary music.

Types of projects funded under this grant

Grants up to the value of \$20,000 may support advice from consultants and experts to create fit-for-purpose venues such as:

- assessment reports to support infrastructure development (e.g. soundproofing, ventilation, accessibility)
- development application and planning expenses
- legal services and licensing consultants
- energy efficiency audits.

Examples of venue types may include, but are not limited to small bars, hotels, clubs (including DJ performance venues) and community halls.

The project start date must be after 17/04/2025 and the project end date must be before 30/06/2026.

Who can't apply

Ineligible applicants include:

- any business or organisation located outside NSW
- venues with member-only access i.e. venues not usually accessible by the general public (e.g. venues primarily hosting private invite-only functions)
- venues with more than 10 gaming machines
- venues operated by Government (Federal, State or Local), or Education providers. Crown leased properties are eligible where operated by an otherwise eligible entity.
- religious institutions
- venues that are vessels (boats on water) or mobile venues of no fixed address
- venues unable to provide a co-contribution at least 30% of the overall project budget

What co-contributions are required

Applicants must make a cash co-contribution of at least 30% of the overall cost of the advice.

What your application needs to include

Prepare your application with this checklist

Applicants must submit the following as part of their application. These materials will all form part of the assessment.

- an outline of your experience in delivering contemporary music programming
- evidence of delivering contemporary music programming
- evidence of the venues impact on the contemporary live music ecosystem
- an outline of how the venue contributes to increasing diversity of live music offering to improve audience experiences
- an outline of how the grant will support improvements that enable the venue to be fit-for purpose
- a quote for advice
- budget including 30% cash co-contribution

Additional Considerations

Sound NSW is committed to a diverse contemporary music sector in NSW and encourages applications from venues owned and operated by, or that cater for, First Nations people, people who identify as women and non-binary, people with disability,

people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and venues located in Western Sydney and regional and remote communities.

Address the eligibility criteria

Each applicant, as part of an application response, must confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria.

Applicants that do not address the eligibility criteria in full may be excluded from the application process at the department's discretion.

Address the assessment criteria

Applications (including written responses and supporting documentation) will be assessed against the following criteria.

Criteria 1 - Impact to the contemporary live music ecosystem

Evidence of new and original contemporary music programming, the established relationships with artist and music businesses and how this is increasing diversity of live music to improve audience experiences.

Tell us in detail about:

- your experience in delivering contemporary music programming (include examples)
- the key people involved in delivering live music programming
- demonstrated diversity of live music programming
- support letters from relevant artists and music businesses

Criteria 2 - Benefit to the live music venue

Evidence that this grant will enable improvements for the venue to be fit-for purpose, enhance expertise and establish best practice business operations.

Tell us in detail about:

- what improvements you are seeking the grant for and how this will ensure the venue is fit-for-purpose for live music programming
- support letter from premises (building) owner for proposed grant where premises not owned by the applicant
- provide a quote for advice
- provide a budget including 30% cash co-contribution

SmartyGrants

Sound NSW uses the secure online grants system, SmartyGrants, to manage all its grant programs. All Venue Upgrade Grant applications must be submitted via the online portal. You will receive an email confirmation of your application from SmartyGrants when your application has been accepted.

After the application is submitted

Successful applications will be decided by: Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy

Eligibility

Your application will be checked by Sound NSW for eligibility against the published Eligibility Criteria. If eligible, your application will proceed to the next assessment stage. If ineligible, you will be advised via email within 14 business days and your application will not proceed to assessment.

Sound NSW reserves the right to provide Applicants with an opportunity to provide clarification or additional information regarding the Eligibility Criteria provided the principles of probity are not breached.

Incomplete applications will be deemed ineligible.

Assessment

If your application is eligible, the application will be evaluated by an assessment panel including representatives from Sound NSW and Create Infrastructure as well as a representative with relevant experience from the industry assessor pool.

Assessments will be undertaken against the assessment criteria, adhering to the principals of value for money in accordance with the NSW Government Grants Administration Guide (March 2024)

Successful applications will be approved by Head of Sound NSW based on recommendations from the assessment panel.

Application Outcome

It is intended that applicants will be notified of the decision within 4 weeks of the date of assessment.

Sound NSW will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants, where requested.

Successful grant applications

If your application is successful, you will be sent a funding agreement (contract), generally within one month of notification. This outlines the conditions of funding, how you will be paid and your grant reporting requirements.

Contracts will not be issued, and payments will not be made, until all Sound NSW and Create NSW outstanding acquittals have been submitted.

Sound NSW staff will review required reporting outlined below and may contact you for additional information as part of this process.

Payment will be dependent on when the signed Funding Agreement has been returned to Sound NSW, as well as any special conditions, variations or outstanding acquittals being satisfactorily completed.

Acknowledgement of Sound NSW

As a recipient of Government funding, you will be expected to acknowledge the support from Sound NSW in all publications, promotional and advertising materials and public announcements.

Payment and Reporting

Successful applicants will receive 100% of approved funds on approval of application and execution of funding deed. Applicants will be required to provide an acquittal at the end of the funding period.

Program evaluation

The Program will be evaluated to measure how well the outcomes and objectives have been achieved.

We may collect and use information from your application and reports for this purpose. We may also interview you or ask you for more information to help us understand how the Program impacted your venue and to evaluate how effective the project was in achieving its outcomes.

We may contact you up to three years after you receive the final grant payment associated with the grant round for more information to assist with this evaluation. Create NSW and the NSW Audit Office reserves the right to undertake an audit of Program funding and support within seven years.

Anticipated assessment outcome date is within four weeks of the date of assessment.

Anticipated date for funding deed execution with successful applicants is within one month of notification.

Support and contact

Sound NSW staff are available to provide technical advice and general information to potential applicants on the interpretation of these guidelines, including the types of activity eligible for funding and support with the online application process.

Sound NSW staff cannot help directly with your application. To maintain a fair and equitable process, staff cannot edit or correct any applications or provide advice on the content or choices required against the Assessment Criteria.

Contact Details

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Image: Venues Upgrade Grant 2024/2025, Program 1, Vintage Culture Official After Party at Carousel, 3rd May 2024, Image provided by Carousel Bar & Ballroom