



Atsain Round 6 - Economic and Social Barriers

Funding Guidelines

What is the focus of this Atsain Round?

Anthem's next Atsain funding round is focused on supporting music projects that help young people in Wales facing economic and social barriers. This round prioritises addressing issues related to socio-economic disadvantage, which can prevent young musicians from accessing the support and opportunities needed to progress in the music industry.

Anthem envisions a Wales where music has the power to ignite and transform every young life. We believe music is a vibrant, unstoppable force for young people—fueling self-expression, sparking personal growth, and uplifting well-being. Our new fund aims to break down the significant barriers related to social and economic background that prevent some young people from experiencing the full benefits of music-making. Building on insights from Youth Music's *Blueprint for the Future*, which highlights social class as a key barrier to music participation, we are committed to supporting projects that ensure all young people, regardless of their background, can access meaningful music-making opportunities.

“SOCIAL CLASS IS THE BIGGEST BARRIER - Social class was found above all else to influence young people's chances of earning money through music. Those from lower income backgrounds were significantly less likely to be earning money through music than those from higher income backgrounds. This disparity held even if they had both studied music at school, college or university. Comparisons between earners from lower and higher income backgrounds also revealed gaps between those who had completed both unpaid and unpaid work placements.” *Blueprint for The Future, Youth Music*

For anyone interested in finding out more about the research Youth Music have done into the topic of young people, music and socio-economic inequality please see the following links:

[Let's Talk About the Class Ceiling in Music | Youth Music](#)

[A Blueprint for the Future | Youth Music](#)

Anthem's aim is to discover more about the key issues for young people experiencing socio-economic barriers and support grassroots youth music organisations across Wales to explore solutions through project work. We also aim to run a consultation with funded organisations across the next 6 months to dig deeper into what young people are experiencing across Wales.

We already know that there are organisations that have done some great work with specific groups of young people who face disadvantages in terms of accessing and enjoying music. We're keen to use this round to build a specific set of data and research around this particular issue. Anthem values opportunities to learn and develop what we do, and this round will be particularly key in establishing the key issues around this barrier, particularly as socio-economic disadvantage is not a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act.

Who is eligible for funding?

To be eligible for the Atsain Round, your organization must:

- Operate as a Charity, CIC, CIO, Partnership, or Company Limited by Guarantee with a governing document.
- Have a UK bank account and provide a set of accounts.
- Implement safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.
- Work with youth in Wales.

What are the funding priorities?

For this Atsain round, funded projects should:

1. Address specific socio-economic barriers that impact young people's ability to access music opportunities.
2. Focus on young people facing complex, intersectional challenges, such as:
 - disadvantage due to race, class, identity, gender, trauma, or bereavement.
 - Financial hardship, including risk factors like homelessness or contact with the care system.
 - Lack of access to music industry networks, mentors, or relatable role models.
3. Contribute to building a strong data and research foundation on socio-economic barriers in Wales through a consultation process taking place during the duration of the project as well as collaborative evaluation.

Examples of eligible projects might include:

- Programs providing music mentoring or training for economically disadvantaged young people.
- Initiatives creating performance and industry networking opportunities for young people lacking music industry access.
- Community-based projects that support young musicians in developing musical skills in supportive and financially accessible environments.

What we will not fund

- Schools, colleges, or educational institutions directly.
- Individual instrument lesson fees.
- Equipment-only projects unless part of a broader initiative.
- Music curriculum-related activities aimed at qualifications (e.g., GCSE or A-Level).
- Projects outside Wales or those recently funded by the Youth Music Incubator or Trailblazer Funds.

Funding Amounts and Duration

This Atsain Round offers grants up to £7,500. We anticipate funding approximately seven organizations. Project durations can range between 6 and 18 months, with project completion expected by 30 September 2026 at the latest.

How to apply

Application Process

Applications for this Atsain Round will be submitted online. Each application should include:

1. **Application form** and supporting documents, with a project summary of no more than three sides of A4 (or equivalent in video/audio format).
2. **Budget** and any additional required documents uploaded in written form.
3. **Project summary** outlining:
 - Your organization's work in music with socio-economically disadvantaged youth.
 - The socio-economic barriers addressed by the project.
 - Anticipated project outcomes and a plan for monitoring and evaluation.

Application Timeline

- **Opening Date:** December 2024
- **Deadline:** February 2025
- **Funding Decision Notification:** By March 2025

Project Assessment Criteria

Applications will be reviewed based on:

- Alignment with the priority of addressing socio-economic barriers.
- Strong youth voice and community-led project structure.
- Realistic project outcomes and sustainability.
- Effective partnership and collaboration with local organisations and networks.
- Inclusion of a robust evaluation and reporting plan.

What can I spend the funding on?

Funding can be used for direct project expenses, including:

- Staff and freelancer fees, venue rentals, equipment tied to project activities, and promotion.
- Contribution to overhead costs (up to 10% of the total project budget).

We do not cover pre-award costs, large capital expenses, recoverable VAT, or costs linked to political or religious promotion.

How do I apply for funds?

Applying to Atsain is a one-stage process. The steps in the application process are as follows:

1. Submit your application form, budget and supporting documents online via our grants portal by 5pm on the deadline date.
Our application form contains a range of questions which need to be completed, but you will also be asked to submit a word document no longer than three sides of A4 which will lay out answers to the key questions.
This information can also be submitted in video, powerpoint or audio format. You will also need to submit a budget and various supporting documents which can only be submitted in written form.
2. Your application form is assessed by our panel, and a decision is made about

whether or not it is awarded funding.

3. We will send you an email to notify you of the decision. If you are unsuccessful this includes feedback on your application. If you are successful, this will outline next steps about how to accept your grant and receive your first payment.

How are projects assessed?

Our assessment panel will make a decision based on how great the need is for the work, and how successfully they feel the project will tackle specific socio-economic barriers to music for young people. This panel will be made up of young people, musicians and arts professionals with lived experience and knowledge of socio-economic barriers to participation for young people.

We aim to fund as diverse a range of organisations as possible in order to address this specific barrier to music participation faced by young people. We consider location, size, language, genre and target audiences in order to achieve a balanced portfolio of funded organisations.

Your project will be assessed on the following specific criteria:

- Are the organisation and project eligible?
- Does the project meet our priorities?
- Has it demonstrated that there is a need for the project?
- Are there strong and realistic outcomes?
- Does it demonstrate effective partnership working?
- Are young peoples' voices heard in your project?
- Is there a robust evaluation strategy?
- Have you thought about the legacy or sustainability of your project?
- Is there a realistic and accurate budget for the project?
- Has all the required supporting material been provided?
- Is there a robust safeguarding policy in place?
- Do you have a good organisational track record?
- Do your accounts show good financial management?

Frequently Asked Questions

What can I spend the money on?

We will fund costs that are a direct result of the project, such as staff costs, freelancer fees, venue hire, equipment purchase, marketing costs etc.

We will also make a contribution towards the overheads that help to support the proposed project such as HR, office rent and utilities, IT systems, governance,

insurance, and audit fees, up to a maximum of 10% of total project costs.

We will not fund activities that have taken place before you have received confirmation of the grant award, costs incurred in making your application, significant capital costs, loans or interest payments, VAT costs that can be recovered or activities that promote party political or religious beliefs.

Can I apply for more than one project?

Organisations can apply for one grant per year.

Can I apply for a second grant for the same project?

Organisations reapplying for another grant will need to have a conversation with us to demonstrate a new need for the work, or how the new work will build on the outcomes already achieved.

Can I apply again if I have been unsuccessful?

Yes. If your application is unsuccessful, we will provide you with feedback and may recommend that you make adjustments to your project in order to improve its chance of success at a future funding round.

Am I expected to meet the word count limits?

No, but please include all the relevant information our panel will need to make a fully informed decision.

What happens if I am successful?

You will be supported throughout your grant by our Programme Manager. We will first issue a funding agreement and an initial grant requirement form for you to complete.

We may request that certain requirements are fulfilled before we can make a final decision about your grant. You may need to provide further documentation or make changes to your application form.

A payment schedule for your project will be issued, that will depend on the length of your project and the amount of the grant. Larger and longer projects may receive payments in installments, while smaller and shorter projects will receive 75% of their grant upfront, with the remaining 25% being paid on receipt of the final project report.

All applicants will be encouraged to join the Atsain Practice Network that will run alongside the fund allowing funded projects to share learning, build relationships amongst network members and across the wider sector, and build best practice in Wales.

What are the deadlines and timescales?

This funding round closes at **5pm on 27th January 2025**.

The panel meets in mid March and applicants should receive notification of whether they have been successful by the end of March.

Support and Further Information

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Anthem's Programme Manager at kofi.acheampong@anthem.wales.