



Luminate Older Artists' Bursaries 2026

Luminate is delighted to announce a programme of small bursaries for artists aged 50 or over who are in the early stages of a new artistic career. You may be someone who has come to your artform for the first time later in life, or you might be returning to an artform you studied to a high level when you were younger, or you could be someone who already works in the arts sector and is looking to make a change of direction in your practice (there are more details on eligibility below).

We are able to offer bursaries between a minimum of £500 to a maximum of £1,000 each, which can be used to support your artistic development. There is a total fund of £10,000. At least one bursary will be awarded to an artist from an ethnically diverse background.

Details of how to apply are below. The deadline for submissions is **5pm on Thursday, 22nd October 2026**, and all applicants will hear the results by 5pm on Monday, 16th November.

We are hosting a short online information session about the bursary application process at 11.30am on Tuesday, 13th October. If you would like to join, please sign up via <https://Luminate-Older-Artist-Bursaries-Info-Session.eventbrite.co.uk> or email info@luminatescotland.org to book a place.

If you would like any of this information in a different format or require further support in making an application, please contact us at info@luminatescotland.org or by phone on 0131 563 1717.

Introduction

This is an opportunity for older artists to define their own artistic development needs and be supported to meet them.

Applications can come from all artforms but artists must be resident in Scotland.

Bursaries can support you to learn new skills, undertake mentoring, coaching or professional training, or travel to build networks or attend conferences. These are only examples, and there may be other areas you'd like to explore.

Applications can come from artists who are already showcasing their work, in whatever form that may take e.g. exhibitions, performances, reading groups, and we also encourage applications from those who have not yet reached an audience but are wanting to do so.

You will find information about previous support that Luminate has provided for older artists here: <https://luminatescotland.org/project/development-for-older-artists/>.

Eligibility

The bursaries are open to artists aged 50 and over, working in all artforms and media, who have recently embarked on a new artistic career, including:

- those who have come new to their arts practice in recent years;
- those who trained at a young age and have returned to their practice later in life;
- those who have worked in the arts in different roles or in a different area of practice, and are now changing direction.

Applicants must be resident in Scotland, though funded activity can take place anywhere.

The Award

The award will be made in 2 parts: 90% prior to the start of the supported activities, and 10% at the end when artists have submitted a short evaluation report.

Please note that the bursary is inclusive of VAT if applicable. Each artist is responsible for their own tax and national insurance.

Timeline

Funded activity must be complete within 8 months of the bursary being awarded.

What are the bursaries unable to support?

- Applications from artists not resident in Scotland

- Applications from anyone who is in full-time education
- Applications for activities that form part of a larger grant application to another organisation
- Applications solely to support the purchase of equipment or materials
- Applications for support for activities that have already started or are already complete
- Applications that are intended to enhance the arts practice of the community and not the artist directly
- Applications that are focused on business development (for example, marketing support).

Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed on:

- The impact the bursary will have on your artistic development
- The feasibility of the activity and budget
- The need for the activity – would it happen without the bursary?

Applications will be assessed by a small panel including representatives from Luminate and from the wider arts and cultural sector, including an older artist.

Luminate welcomes applications from all sections of our community. We recognise that there are barriers to working in the arts and that these challenges are experienced more acutely by some people. We are committed to increasing the diversity of artists working in our sector and especially welcome applications from those who identify as having characteristics currently under-represented in our sector. This includes people with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 across age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. At least one bursary will be awarded to an artist from an ethnically diverse background.

Can I use AI tools to prepare my application?

Yes. You're welcome to use AI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot or Gemini to help you develop, structure or proofread your application. However, your application should remain true to your project, plans, experience and voice. Please check any AI-generated content carefully, as these tools can sometimes produce inaccurate or misleading information. If a section has been generated largely with AI, please add **“Generated with the assistance of AI”** at the start of that section.

Applications containing false, misleading or copied information may not be considered.

Application process

You can apply online via the following link: <https://luminatescotland.org/older-artists-bursary-application-form/>

We can accept submissions in audio or video formats if you prefer this to a written application. If you have a disability, please tell us if there are any reasonable adjustments to the application process that would be of assistance to you. If you would like to discuss this, would like the application in a different format, or need help making your application, please contact info@luminatescotland.org, or phone us on 0131 563 1717.

Alternatively, if you would prefer to fill out a hard copy of the application form then please email us at info@luminatescotland.org, and either email or **post** it to us at: Luminate, First Floor, Causewayside House, 160 Causewayside, Edinburgh EH9 1PR.

All applications must be received by 5pm on Thursday, 22nd October and all applicants will be notified of the result of their application by 5pm on Monday, 16th November.

Evaluation

In order to help us learn from and improve our bursaries programme, successful applicants will be asked to either submit a short report on your experience, or to have a conversation with a member of the Luminate team by phone or online after your project ends.

Privacy Notice for Applicants

Luminate is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information. As part of the selection process we will collect, store and process the data in your application form in line with data protection regulations. We will only use this data in relation to the bursary programme and to communicate with you about your application. If your application is unsuccessful, we will delete your data after 6 months. If your application is successful, it will be stored on Luminate's systems, accessible only by our employees.

Your application data will be processed and stored by Luminate and will be shared with the selection panel. Please note that Luminate's IT systems are supported by Age Scotland.

If you have any questions about this privacy notice, please email info@luminatescotland.org, or contact us by phone on 0131 563 1717.