

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School Hardship Funds Policy

The Bursaries and Hardship Funds are there to assist students who, due to unforeseen circumstances, find themselves in temporary financial hardship.

Bristol Old Vic Theatre School is a registered charity and these bursary funds are donated to the school specifically for the purposes of awarding bursaries to students in financial hardship.

The Panel considers hardship to be where a student does not have sufficient funds to cover basic living costs such as food and rent in the immediate future and has no recourse to other funds.

The Committee Panel comprises:

- Principal
- Head of Finance
- Artistic Director
- Higher Education Admin and Student Support Manager
- Admissions Manager (Chair)

The Panel will meet as often as necessary for the timely consideration of applications, usually once a term. It will also consider emergency applications when necessary.

Eligibility:

Applicants must be fully-enrolled students of the School registered on:

- a validated higher education programme for undergraduate or postgraduate basis.

These funds are not available to "visiting students" or participants on other courses offered by the School not stated above.

Priority Groups:

The priority groups for the Fund are:

- Lone Parents
- Disabled students
- Care leavers
- Estranged students
- Carers
- Second degree students

Application process:

The panel is empowered to make small cash awards in emergency situations (up to £700 per month).

All applicants must complete the hardship fund application and provide supporting evidence of hardship including recent bank statements showing current balance, Student Loan Company documentation, and other sources of income.

A student may be expected to meet with a member of the panel (or nominee) either in advance of applying or as part of confirmation of an award.

Application consideration:

Each application will be considered on its merits.

The Committee will consider:

- The circumstances surrounding a student's hardship
- A student's income and expenditure
- Bank statements showing balance(s) at time of application and other savings and other investments
- Any scholarship the student is already receiving from the School
- Any outstanding tuition fees owed
- Any hardship fund support previously awarded and any expectations set out when that award was made (eg seeking budgeting help, seeking paid employment etc)
- Any disability needs not covered by DSA.

Funds will not provide awards for:

- Travel to home address (UK or abroad) except in extraordinary circumstances (e.g. serious illness of a relative, or death in a family)
- Competition fees or travel to competitions or similar
- Headshot photography
- Health & Welfare services that are already provided by the School
- Legal Fees
- Non-essential items

Awards will be capped at £2,100 per application. There is no standard award amount and an award to one student does not set a precedent in respect of an award to another student.

Students on Student Visas are sponsored by the School on the understanding that they have provided evidence, acceptable to the UK government, that they can support themselves and will have no need for recourse to public funds. A Student on a Student Visa may apply for hardship but the Panel will need to be assured of the unforeseen and temporary nature of the financial hardship.

Decision

The offer of an award is entirely at the discretion of the Panel and the Panel's decision is final. However, an unsuccessful applicant may resubmit an application with new or additional information at any time.

Data Usage

Data collected on the application form will be used solely for the purpose of assessing applications and for statistical, monitoring purposes and audit purposes. However, information provided in a statement that indicates a potential student welfare issue will prompt the Student Support Manager to contact the student concerned.

Supporting financial documentation will not be kept after a final decision on a student's application has been made and will be deleted at the end of each academic year.

Anonymised case studies of applications may be used for information services to students or for raising money for the Hardship Fund.

NOTE: Students may also be eligible for hardship funds via UWE Bristol.

More information can be found using the links below:

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/life/money-and-finance/funds-during-study>

Details of the UWE Bristol Fund are below;

Applications can be made here - <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/courses/funding/uwe-bristol-fund/student-hardship-grant>

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