fabric

Residencies Open Call 2027 to 2028

Money, space and staff time for UK-based dance artists to explore new ideas and bring projects to life.

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About Fabric

Fabric is a dance development organisation based in the Midlands, UK with sites in Birmingham and Nottingham. Our mission is to create the conditions for dance to flourish, contributing to the health, wellbeing, development and connection of individuals, communities and cultures.

We celebrate the social value of dance and movement by connecting people, sharing ideas and building partnerships. We believe through creativity, performance, participation and learning, more people can experience the benefits of the artform in their lives and communities.

We imagine a future where dance plays an even greater role in the lives of people and communities across the Midlands. Where the region is recognised globally for dance that is remarkable, engaging, authentic, representative, captivating, involving and rooted in place.

Our ten-year strategy, dance moves people, sets out how we will get there.

Our curatorial values

Our approach is informed by care, openness and rigour, through the curatorial values of:

- **Curiosity** – an openness to taking risks, being uncertain, and asking difficult questions.
- **Disruption** – embracing risk-taking, action and investment that might disrupt old or accepted ways of working.
- **Joy** – the lens through which everything should be seen and approached.

Our four cornerstones

Our work is framed by four cornerstones:

- **Research** – holding a space of curiosity driven by the desire to understand more about what dance is, what it can be, and what impact it can have physically, emotionally, socially, culturally and curatorially.
- ·**Engagement** – creating an accessible and sustainable environment for organisations, artists and practitioners to connect with people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, for the joy of dance in all its forms.
- **Sector Development** – creating, identifying and supporting conditions for growth through strategic conversations and actions that connect artists, participants and the work, politically, culturally and socially.
- **Presentation and Showcasing** – producing, co-producing and championing art and performance with dance and movement at its core, to ensure the artform is recognised for the essential role it plays in the UK's cultural and creative offering.

Why We Offer Residencies

We believe that time for artists to research in a studio with reduced barriers is vital to art-making.

Our year round residency programme is one of the ways we work to improve the working conditions of artists, and to invest in new research and creation that will engage and resonate with audiences in fresh and different ways.

We strive to make our artist residencies accessible and inclusive, and to create working conditions that centre the care and dignity of all.

We support work that is ready to be strengthened and shared, while also making room for new ideas to grow, with time for thinking, testing and practice without the pressure to produce finished work. In doing so, we aim to support the sustainability of the freelance dance workforce.

Residencies connect with all four of our cornerstones. They hold space for **Research**, connect artists with people through **Engagement**, build shared learning that feeds **Sector Development**, and can lead towards the **Presentation and Showcasing** of new work.

About the Opportunity

We are delighted to open applications for Fabric Residencies 2027 to 2028. Open to professional independent artists based in the UK who work in dance, movement or choreography. We are offering money, space and staff time to explore new ideas and support the realisation of projects.

We have a total budget of £56,000, to distribute across approximately 7 projects. At least 2 residency places will be prioritised for artists who currently live and work in the Midlands.

We are particularly keen to hear about work led by disabled-led artists and international collaborations that already exist, where you and your collaborator(s) have an established working relationship.

Residencies will take place between April 2027 and March 2028 in either of the Fabric sites, within set scheduled residency periods (see “The Offer” section below for dates residencies can take place). Within those set dates, your residency can take place in consecutive bulk blocks of days, or individual days to work around your other work and life commitments.

Key Criteria -
What are we looking for?

We seek out artists who are clear in the conviction of their ideas, with an appetite to exhaust the possibilities of those ideas.

We are interested in work that extends practice, knowledge and discourse; that invites conversation and connection; and that expands our understanding of what dance is and can be. Work can disrupt and provoke thought and still bring joy; we believe these can co-exist.

We are looking for:

- An idea that resonates with our curatorial values of Curiosity, Disruption and Joy
- Bold ideas that extend your artistic practice, with dance and movement at their core
- A project that's well considered and manageable within the budget, and timeline proposed
- A genuine and realistic connection with the public (see "Public Engagement" section)

Please Note: Fabric residencies are designed and resourced to take place without additional funding. You are welcome to apply for additional funds to enhance the opportunity, but the residency should not rely on them, and the project as outlined, must be deliverable regardless.

Stages of work

We welcome applications for work at different stages of development. In the application form, we will ask you which of these best describes your project.
Please note: **No stage is prioritised over another.**

Research

A new idea that needs time and space to explore, test and develop.

Development

A project that has already been through a research and development process and would benefit from more time to adapt, strengthen or finalise, ready for touring or presentation.

International collaboration

Collaboration, co-creation and/or research with an artist living outside the UK. Please tell us why this collaborator is essential and what they uniquely bring to the residency.

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The Offer

Space

- Studio space provided in kind at Fabric at either our Birmingham and/or Nottingham sites.
- A minimum of 5 days and a maximum of 10 days

To manage studio availability, residencies will take place within the following residency periods:

Residency Period	Dates	Fabric Site
June 2027	Week commencing 7 June Week commencing 14 June	Nottingham
	Week commencing 21 June Week commencing 28 June	Birmingham
November 2027	Week commencing 8 November Week commencing 15 November	Birmingham
	Week commencing 22 November Week commencing 29 November	Nottingham
January/February 2028	Week commencing 24 January Week commencing 31 January	Birmingham
	Week commencing 7 February Week commencing 14 February	Nottingham
March 2028	Week commencing 6 March Week commencing 13 March	Birmingham
	Week commencing 20 March Week commencing 27 March	Nottingham

Please note: Your availability will not be scored and will not affect how your application is assessed; it simply helps us plan.

We will consider residencies taking place in other spaces if there is a specific rationale; for example, it takes place in your home, the work needs a messy space, it relates to a specific community located elsewhere, or it is site-specific or outdoors.

Money

- A cash bursary of £1,000 to £8,000
- We expect time, expenses and fees to be considered and paid fairly, with access costs included where relevant

Staff time

- Fabric staff time is provided in-kind
- We will support the management of your residency including preparation time and evaluation time
- We can offer advice across the industry, including producing, community engagement, finance, marketing, research and international marketplaces
- We will make time for you to meet the wider Fabric team during your residency – an informal chance to connect

Public Engagement

Through our **Engagement** cornerstone, we want to connect artists with people of any ages, abilities and backgrounds, for the joy of dance in all its forms. Unless otherwise agreed for online or remote delivery for a particular reason agreed in advance, all residencies should include meaningful engagement with people and communities in the Midlands.

This could take place through (but is not limited to) Fabric's existing programmes, your own networks and relationships, or by creating opportunities to connect with new communities. Whatever approach you choose, it should be carefully considered and appropriate to the people you hope to work with.

We encourage you to think about public engagement from the earliest stages of your proposal. Developing meaningful engagement takes time, particularly when working with new audiences or communities (new to either you or Fabric). Both you and Fabric will need sufficient time to build trust, develop relationships, understand context, and shape engagement activity that is relevant, welcoming and beneficial for everyone involved.

When planning your residency, you will need to consider how audiences and/or participants will be identified, engaged and supported throughout the process, ensuring that any public-facing activity is thoughtful and genuinely connected to your artistic work.

What do we mean by engagement?

Engagement should be proportionate and attainable. We would rather see one well-held moment of genuine connection than several activities stretched thin. It should be realistic for you to deliver within your residency days and budget, and realistic for Fabric to support within our programmes and capacity.

Examples could consist of, or include but are not limited to:

- Classes whether it be for dance professionals, children and young people, the community etc.
- Writing to be hosted and shared publicly by Fabric online or in print
- A podcast to be hosted and shared publicly by Fabric online
- A sharing of what you are working on, shared with a public audience
- A participation invitation – for example, a community workshop, a conversation about your work over food, or a co-creation opportunity with non-professionals, an open studio inviting selected people in to see you at work or something else that invites participation of some kind
- A resource for the sector

...or something more imaginative. It's up to you to propose what you believe will connect your work to others in a genuine and mutually beneficial way.

How we will agree it

At your first meeting, one of the things we will talk through together is your engagement plan, to make sure there's a shared understanding of a realistic commitment that works within the time and resource made available, and agree any adaptations so that it works alongside Fabric's values, programmes and communities. These commitments will then be written into your residency agreement, so expectations are clear on both sides.

Care, Access and Sustainability

Access

At Fabric, we strive to make our residencies accessible and inclusive, and to create working conditions that centre the care and dignity of all. We are open and willing to learn, and we aim to reduce barriers at every stage and we would expect you to have this in your thinking too.

When applying

- You can apply in written, video or audio format, and the guidance is available as audio
- We have a small budget of up to £150 per applicant for access support to apply for supporting those that require it. For example, working with a support worker, a scribe, or a BSL interpreter; where it may not already be available to you through Access to Work. We do not count producer time or paying for your own time to apply as access support
- To request support, please email **artists@fabric.dance** and briefly tell us the current barriers to applying, the amount you are requesting (up to £150), and how it will support you

During your residency

- Support workers and/or access equipment and technology are intended to be funded through **Access to Work** for working disabled artists. It is your responsibility to apply if this is relevant to you
- We recognise that Access to Work is not always accessible, waiting times can be long and acknowledge that it has become more difficult to attain. If you are unable to get support, or are waiting on a response, include your access costs in the Access column of your budget
- We can adapt how we meet, plan and evaluate with you, including offering an access-friendly evaluation template

Full details: www.fabric.dance/access-support-for-artist-residencies

Environmental sustainability

We recognise the Climate Crisis as one of the systemic issues our sector must address, and we are committed to finding ways of working with artists that are less extractive, more sustainable and regenerative. We encourage residency artists to consider the environmental impact of their project, including:

- Is your project sustainable? Have you thought about and considered different ways in which it could happen to enable sustainability/ longevity?
- Choosing slow travel within the UK wherever possible (we do not fund flights, except for international collaboration)
- Reusing, borrowing or sourcing materials responsibly, and planning what happens to them after the residency. Check in with Fabric on what resources we have that might be helpful
- Considered planning and organisation **in advance** to understand what is essential around set/props etc. how this is transported and using ethical suppliers where possible
- Drawing on free guidance, such as the **Theatre Green Book** and **Julie's Bicycle**, if helpful.
- Utilising free online tools such as **Creative Climate Tools** to track and monitor your carbon footprint and impact.

Your Commitment

As part of our offer, we ask for the following commitments:
(Please plan for these within your project and include the time in your budget)

- **A first meeting** where together we will confirm your proposal and your brief, your commitment and ours, your engagement plan, access needs, and the planning detail and timeline for your residency (dates, space and logistics)
- At least one further meeting to confirm residency details (a minimum of 2 meetings in total)
- Completing a marketing form with text and images by an agreed deadline, so we can promote your residency and public engagement
- Scheduled time during your residency to meet the Fabric team (an informal relaxed setting)
- An invitation to create content (visual and/or audio) for social media, and to take part in a final sharing event
- A commitment to evaluating the residency with us, so we can learn from each other and inform Fabric's future work. Allocate up to half a day's time to evaluate the process, share learning, including a meeting up to 1.5 hours
- An openness to collaborative working and developing shared learning with Fabric
- An openness to consider different ways in which your work could happen in a way that positively impacts environmental sustainability
- A commitment to mutual respect, care and kindness

Budgeting and Planning Guidance

Rather than setting a fixed amount, Fabric is committed to providing the funds needed to deliver your proposed project, between £1000 and £8000. We expect time, expenses and fees to be considered and paid fairly. You will be asked how much you need and what for. You can use our budget template example to submit your proposed budget.

We imagine the budget will mainly cover:

- Fees
- National travel
- International travel for international collaboration projects only
- Local accommodation
- Per diems
- Small props, materials or consumables
- Time and expenses to deliver the commitments outlined above
- Access costs not covered by Access to Work

We will not cover costs for:

- Buying assets
- Space hire (outside of Fabric's free space)
- Flights for UK based residencies, exception for international collaboration (slow travel is encouraged within the UK)
- Technology, equipment or digital production costs where these take precedence over the movement practice – dance and movement should remain at the centre of the residency

Your residency could support a single artist or an artist working with collaborators. You will need to balance the length of your residency against the number of people being paid and your total budget request.

For example: One or two people might be paid for 10 days (the maximum number of studio days available), whereas four people might only be paid for 5 days, so the residency would be shorter.

We recommend using **ITC and/or Equity rates as a guide**. Other industry-standard rates may apply depending on your collaborators.

If you receive Universal Credit and need to balance payments to align with your work allowance, we are happy to talk through how to make this work for you.

Eligibility

Who can apply?

- A professional artist or collective who work primarily in dance, movement or choreography
- Be independent (not a regularly funded organisation)
- Be 18 or over and live and work in the UK year-round

By professional, we mean you have an ongoing artistic practice that you are developing as your work. This includes artists at an early stage of their career.

Who cannot apply?

- Artists employed full time by a regularly funded arts, culture or heritage organisation in the UK
- Regularly funded organisations (such as National Portfolio Organisations)
- Full-time undergraduate or Masters students
- Recipients of Fabric Residencies 2026/2027 and 2025/2026
- Non-professional dance groups/collectives

We will only accept one application per artist, collective or company. You are welcome to apply with a project you have applied with before, if you feel this benefits you.

Selection Process

We will select and support as many projects as we can with the funds available and the ideas presented, and we will offer at least 2 residency places to artists who currently live and work in the Midlands*.

Applications are assessed by a selection panel who change from year to year as do our programme priorities. We welcome repeat applications but previously submitted applications are not considered alongside new ones, so feedback and outcomes may differ from one round to the next.

*The Midlands is: Birmingham, Coventry, Derby, Derbyshire, Dudley, Leicester, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Herefordshire, Northamptonshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Sandwell, Shropshire, Solihull, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford and Wrekin, Walsall, Warwickshire, Wolverhampton and Worcestershire.

How it works

- All applications are checked for eligibility
- At stage 1, your artistic idea and submitted video is read/ viewed in full by a minimum of two panel members, who shortlist together
- At stage 2, shortlisted applications are read in full
- All shortlisted applications are discussed at a full selection panel meeting day
- Final selection considers balance across the cohort, including Midlands places and disability and diverse representation

Selection criteria

Applications will be scored on:

- The quality, strength and boldness of the artistic idea, and its potential to extend your practice
- Alignment with our curatorial values of Curiosity, Disruption and Joy, and our approach of care, openness and rigour
- How well considered and manageable the project is
- An understanding of audience, and a genuine and realistic connection with the public
- Something exceptional in the project that has caught our attention

Feedback

We receive a high volume of applications. Last year, we received 207 applications for 7 places. We are a small team, and we want to be honest about what we can offer. We will provide short written feedback drawn from the selection panel's notes, unless you choose not to received feedback when completing the application.

If you are based in the Midlands or your work has a Midlands focus, and are not selected this time, we would like to stay connected and may be in touch about other ways to work with Fabric.

How to Apply

- Read this guidance in full to make sure you are eligible and that your project idea aligns
- A Word version of the application questions is available here, based on experience **we strongly advise you work offline first** and save your application on the Word version first. Once you are happy with your answers and feel ready, you can paste your answers into the online form.
- You can answer the questions in writing, or upload a video or audio response. Please check the time limits for video/audio responses
- An audio reading for each page of the guidance has been made available (top right of each page)
- Submit your budget using our budget template example
- **We will only accept one application per artist, collective or company**

Online Information sessions

Join one of our online information sessions: which will include a short 15-minute introduction to the residency offer, followed by time for your questions.

- **Tuesday 3 November, 12pm**
- **Wednesday 25 November (with BSL) 6pm**

Support to apply

If you have any questions, or would like support from a member of our team (who won't be part of the selection process) to complete your application, email: **artists@fabric.dance.**

Key Dates

Online information sessions (2 online sessions)	Tuesday 3 November, 12pm Wednesday 25 November, 6pm with BSL
Application deadline	Monday 7 December, 11am
Offers made by	Week commencing Monday 1 February 2027
Residencies to take place	Between April 2027 and March 2028 within set residency periods (see The Offer section below)

Application Deadline:
Monday 7 December 2026, 11am

Please note: Submitting an application in the final minutes can sometimes lead to technical difficulties, so we advise you not to do so.

Applications won't be accepted after the deadline.

Click/tap here to access the online application form

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my project need to be at a particular stage?

No. We welcome research, development and international collaboration projects, and no stage is prioritised. The form asks you to tell us which best describes your project.

Can I apply with a project I've applied with before?

Yes. Please tell us how the project or your thinking has developed since your last application.

Will the date windows I tick affect my application?

No. Availability is not scored. It helps us plan studio use across the year.

How much public engagement is expected?

Engagement should be proportionate and attainable within your residency days and budget. We will agree the detail with you at your first meeting, and write it into your residency agreement.

Can my budget include technology or equipment?

Only where it supports the movement practice rather than leading it. We do not fund buying assets.

Frequently Asked Questions

(Continued)

Do I need to live in the Midlands?

No. The residencies are open to artists across the UK, with at least 2 places prioritised for artists who live and work in the Midlands. Engagement should take place in the Midlands unless agreed otherwise.

Can I apply as a collective or company?

Yes, with a named lead artist who meets the eligibility criteria. Only one application per artist, collective or company.

I receive Universal Credit. Can you help?

Yes. We are happy to talk through how payments can align with your work allowance.

Will I get feedback?

Yes, short written feedback will be provided.