



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

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Giles Watling MP
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Dear Giles,

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 February, to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, regarding support for freelancers. I am replying as the Minister for Digital and Culture.

The government has supported the self-employed in the cultural and creative sectors. Over two thirds of all those who are self-employed in the country have been eligible for the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS). SEISS has been extended until April 2021 and has been made more generous, with individuals able to receive 80% of their average trading profits. The government is providing the same level of support for the self-employed as is being provided for employees through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme which has also been extended until April 2021. 76,000 self-employed in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector received SEISS support in phase 1 earlier this year and 72,000 in phase 2.

Additionally, the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund is benefiting freelancers. Around 40% of CRF awards have gone to non-building-based companies (and building based companies are also likely to employ significant numbers of contracted employees), and it is estimated that around 12.5% of business costs by CRF recipients will go to freelancers, artists and casual events staff.

Arts Council England has made over £26 million of awards to over 8,200 individuals through non-CRF funds in this financial year alone, including:

- £17.1 million distributed through the Emergency Response Fund for individuals;
- £9 million awarded directly to individuals through Arts Council's Project Grants fund.

In addition, £6 million has been given to benevolent funds to provide direct awards to individuals, so far reaching more than 3,400 people.

DCMS appreciates the important contribution that creative industries provide to the UK's cultural economy, and that the COVID-19 pandemic presents a significant challenge to many businesses operating in this sector. We are committed to continuing to work with the music and cultural sectors to understand the difficulties they face and help them access support through these challenging times and through recovery.

I hope you find this information useful.

With best wishes,

Caroline Dinenage MP
Minister of State for Digital and Culture



