

New bursaries to boost teenagers' creative careers

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A new bursary has been launched to help young people reach their artistic ambitions.

The Ignite Bursary Programme will allow successful applicants to access up to £500 to follow their creative passions.

The scheme is being run by Sunderland Culture and is designed for 12 to 18-year-olds who live in low-income households and for those up to 25 years old with special educational needs or disabilities.

Lucy Rees Harris, from Sunderland Culture, said the extra money would help those eligible “realise their creative career ambitions”.

The money can be used to buy materials, access work experience, arrange a cultural trip or develop a portfolio.

“Successful recipients may also want to use a bursary to engage a mentor to help develop networks and connections or to access ‘backstage’ discussions with artists and creative professionals,” Ms Harris said.

“Or it might be something completely different. You can request funding for anything, if you can demonstrate it will further your creative passion and explain why.”

Financial barriers

The bursaries are available through Sunderland Culture's Culture Start project as part of its wider Ignite Young Creatives Programme.

Ignite has been designed to address the barriers young people experiencing financial hardship face when trying to work in the arts and culture sector.

The bursary is supported by the Gillian Dickinson Trust, which provides grants to artistic organisations, and the Esmeé Fairbairn Foundation, which aims to improve the natural world and creative communities.

Those wishing to apply for the bursary must:

- Live in Sunderland
- Meet the age requirements
- Be able to demonstrate their passion
- Have an adult who can provide a reference for their application
- Be eligible for free school meals, pupil premium or meet the [Culture Start, external](#) eligibility criteria
- Have a bank account

Source: Jonny Manning, BBC News, North East and Cumbria