## **The Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation (BLCF) manages the Luton Arts programme for Luton Borough Council.**

Please make sure you carefully read the criteria document on our website [www.blcf.org.uk](http://www.blcf.org.uk) before applying. Please get in touch with the Luton Arts team before applying to ensure they can best help you with your project goals.

How to apply:

All applicants must submit an online form, so please only use this document to plan – we cannot accept this word document. When you register, you will get a unique link which you can save as you go, and the team at BLCF can help you by viewing your in-progress grant application.

**The deadline for online form submission is 15th August 2025 at 12pm (midday.)**

Next steps:

Applications will be reviewed, and applicants will be notified of the outcome by the end of September 2025.

Project delivery period: Activity must be completed by the 30th June 2026.

For any questions please email [grants@blcf.org.uk](mailto:grants@blcf.org.uk)

## Personal Circumstances

You will be asked to provide your name and contact details, and your date of birth to cross-reference with your identification later.

Please tell us a bit about yourself. What current work are you undertaking as an artist and what experience you have, and what is your connection to Luton? (250 words)

I am born and bred in Luton and have a keen interest in photography as a medium to document underrepresented stories. I have grown up hearing constant negative headlines about my hometown and I want to use creativity to challenge this. Luton is an amazing place to live, and each community has beautiful stories to share around culture, language, food, fashion and other mediums. I love visual storytelling. Because of this, my family and friends have often asked me to do event photography. They’ve wanted me to capture key moments in their lives - such as weddings, baby showers, birthday parties, graduation, family portraits. I do not have any formal arts qualification, but my love of photography developed when I was a teenager and visited the **[insert name of exhibition]** exhibition at **[insert name of gallery]** gallery with my family. Since then, I have noticed a huge gap in representation in galleries and museums across the UK. I am, therefore, passionate about addressing this issue by excavating ‘hidden’ community stories and sharing a positive but nuanced portrayal of Luton and its residents.

I am very excited about reconnecting with my inner artist and being able to share the joy of creativity with others. Until now, I have explored photography as a hobby. But I believe this funding opportunity will help me to take a bold step into the arts sector. It will also help me in building a pathway toward a creative career.

*(Feel free to link to external sources in the online form if relevant, such as a web link to a portfolio if it supports this question)*

Please tell us why you are applying- what work are you proposing to be funded? Where is it going to take place? Please be as specific as you can be at this stage. (250 words)

I am currently using my mobile phone to take photographs. I am applying for this funding because I would like to purchase a camera to improve the quality of my photographs. I also hope to attend a photography course to help me develop my skills, so that I can turn my passion into a professional career option.

I would like to buy a Canon EOS 4000D and attend a **[insert name of course]** at **[insert name of college or university]**.

Due to lack of funds, I have had to rely on watching YouTube videos to teach myself the different elements of photography. This opportunity will help me to gain deeper insight and skills which I currently do not have access to.

Once I have purchased the camera and attended the course, my plan will be to test out me new skills by connecting with a local community group, **[insert name of community group]**. I’ll invite 2-3 volunteers who will be happy to have their photographs taken. I will hire a space at **[insert name of centre]** community centre and the volunteers will be invited to share some insight into their heritage as well as their connection to Luton. I will then share this on social media to gather people’s feedback so I can build on this for future work.

What skills do you wish to develop? What would make this opportunity the most impactful to you and those you work with? (250 words)

* The project will help me to build my portfolio as a professional photographer. It will also give me the skills and understanding to create visual stories which will be resonant to the diverse communities in Luton.
* It will support me in developing a strong portfolio and body of work. My longer-term vision is to curate a larger-scale photography exhibition that invites new audiences to engage with the art.
* In the future, I will have the opportunity to collaborate with other photography artists and creative organisations. Together, we could curate mini pop-up exhibitions at various community space across Luton to ensure greater accessibility.
* In the long-term, I would be interested in applying for more funding to deliver the above. I also hope to find a mentor to help me further develop my photography skills and eventually create my own website.

You will then be asked to provide details of your referee. Your referee should be a person who can tell us about your abilities and can confirm your identity.

## Your Request for Funding

How much money are you applying to us for?

£989

Please provide a breakdown of expected costs for your commission (These can be estimates at this stage, and we can work with you to build on this proposal where appropriate.) (250 words)

£399 – Camera

£390 – Photography Course

£100 – Community Hire Space

£100 – Expenses

## Additional Information

There is a final section where you can add anything that you think has not been covered above This may be additional support you need, or anything else you think has not been covered elsewhere. (250 words)

If possible, as I am new to funding, I would value some mentoring support in project management and evaluation report writing.

Finally, you will be asked where you heard about this funding opportunity.

## Supporting Documents and Declaration

**Data and Evaluation**

**What will we ask you to provide to support your application?**

The following supporting documents must be uploaded with your application:

\* Copy of ID which also shows current address (photo ID- Passport or Drivers License)

\* Copy of your bank statement (dated no longer than 3 months ago)

We also welcome:

\* Additional examples of your work (PDF, Image files and Docs can be uploaded, or this could also be link to a media file/video)

Please upload these with your form. If you have any issues, you can email your documents to [grants@blcf.org.uk](mailto:grants@blcf.org.uk)

**What are the evaluation expectations of participating in this programme?**

RMR are a group of research and evaluation specialists who have partnered with Luton Arts to help understand what they do, the difference they make, and what they can do better.

RMR, the evaluation partner of Luton Arts and BLCF, require involvement from successful applicants throughout the course of the project delivery. As part of understanding the difference we make, RMR would like to ask you to reflect on your learning and feedback, which includes the completion of 1) a minimum of three reflections logs (at the start of your project, during, and on completion), 2) attendance at least one reflection session (an online informal conversation with one of the evaluators to discuss how you felt the project went), and 3) completion of at least three ‘outcome wheels’ (a light-touch reflection exercise that allows project teams to self-reflect on their learning journey). The latter will be managed by BLCF, and training will be provided by RMR.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation Privacy Policy, if you are awarded a commission, your details will be collected and stored for a maximum of 6 years after receiving the commission payment. The personal data will be used solely for administering and monitoring this grant programme and will be shared with Luton Arts team at Luton Borough Council for the purpose of considering and supporting the application. Personal data will not be shared with any further third parties not identified in this statement.