

**The Met receives lifeline grant from Government’s £1.57bn Culture Recovery Fund**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 1PM, 12 OCTOBER 2020**

**The Met** in Bury has been awarded £116,000 as part of the Government’s £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund (CRF) to help face the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and to ensure a sustainable future, the Culture Secretary has announced today.

**The Met** is one of 1,385 cultural and creative organisations across the country receiving urgently needed support. £257 million of investment has been announced today as part of the very first round of the Culture Recovery Fund grants programme being administered by Arts Council England. Further rounds of funding in the cultural and heritage sector are due to be announced over the coming weeks.

Bury Metropolitan Arts Association has run The Met as a venue, based in the town’s historic Derby Hall, since 1979. It is a well-loved cultural hub in the town centre, hosting music, theatre and comedy performances and workshops, as well as being home to a recording studio, rehearsal spaces and a popular bar and restaurant. It has become established as a vital touring venue for live music with a unique programme within Greater Manchester, attracting national and international artists as well as providing a platform for emerging talent in a packed programme of shows, festivals and events.

Lockdown has led to the cancelation of hundreds of events and workshops so far with ongoing uncertainty about when the programme will return to normal. But the building has also become synonymous with the resilience of the region’s creative scene during lockdown as the broadcast hub for Greater Manchester’s United We Stream project, which has seen millions of livestreams since April 2020.

The venue has also worked hard to engage with and safely reopen for its participatory groups and the specialist staff who run them to provide creative opportunities for disabled people.

The funding announced today means The Met can continue to invest and improve in digital skills to help connect artists and audiences during the months to come, while also adding security for the 13 full time staff and the network of artists and freelancers who work with the organisation.

**Chief Executive Officer of The Met, Victoria Robinson, said:**

“2020 has been a hugely challenging year for our organisation, and in the creative industries in general.

“Arts centres like ours can play a wider social role bringing communities together and are vital for shaping the recovery of towns across the UK.

“We are grateful to Arts Council England and the DCMS for their role in this funding which means The Met can continue to build on the new skills and knowledge that our team have adapted to so well over the year so far. We will use this to take the next steps to have our work reach people who really need it during the months to come, and to support the artists, technicians and creatives who help us deliver amazing experiences in and beyond our venue.”

**Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:**

“This funding is a vital boost for the theatres, music venues, museums and cultural organisations that form the soul of our nation. It will protect these special places, save jobs and help the culture sector’s recovery.

“These places and projects are cultural beacons the length and breadth of the country. This unprecedented investment in the arts is proof this government is here for culture, with further support to come in the days and weeks ahead so that the culture sector can bounce back strongly.”

**Chair, Arts Council England, Sir Nicholas Serota, said:**

“Theatres, museums, galleries, dance companies and music venues bring joy to people and life to our cities, towns and villages. This life-changing funding will save thousands of cultural spaces loved by local communities and international audiences. Further funding is still to be announced and we are working hard to support our sector during these challenging times.”

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For further information, interviews or images directly relating to The Met, please contact adam.comstive@themet.org.uk

**Arts Council England** is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in [*Let’s Create*](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/letscreate) that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million **Emergency** **Response Package,**with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of several bodies administering the Government’s **Culture Recovery Fund** and unprecedented support package of £1.57 for the culture and heritage sector. Find out more at [www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/BSZ4Cr8O0hqnMXUGP2-l?domain=artscouncil.org.uk)

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**About The Met:** The Met is a charity situated in a beautiful Grade II listed building, in the centre of Bury. Featuring a busy live venue, recording studio and creative hub, The Met presents a range of music, theatre, comedy and festivals alongside specialist and general workshops for the whole community. Funded by Arts Council England, GMCA and Bury Council to increase access to the arts and promote Bury as a good place to live and visit, The Met underwent a £4.6 million refurbishment project in 2016 and its activities are worth in excess of £2.6 million per year to the local economy.

During 2020 The Met has seen its income cut by 65% as event cancellations were enforced for public safety. In addition to joining the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Culture Portfolio, it has also been the broadcast and production hub for Greater Manchester’s United We Stream project, which has so far raised over £500,000 for businesses in the region’s night time economy.

