

Land of Lead and Silver

Community Arts Bursaries 2026



Brief

The North Pennines National Landscape is undertaking a project focusing on the lead and silver mining and processing of the North Pennines. The project, named *Land of Lead and Silver* aims to develop new audiences to the lead and silver mining heritage across the whole of the National Landscape area. Through this project we are seeking proposals from individual artists or groups of artists for projects which will seek to engage new audiences in the lead mining heritage of the North Pennines. Please note, this residency is only available to applicants based in Cumbria, Northumberland, County Durham, Tyne and Wear, and North Yorkshire.

The funding available for each project is up to £4,000. A minimum of three projects will be undertaken in 2026, the final number will be determined by the applications and the funding available. All activities relating to each project will need to be completed by Friday 11th September 2026, and the report submitted by Friday 30th October 2026.

There are two online Q&A sessions available for anyone interested in applying to the Land of Lead and Silver 2026 arts programme, the first at 2-3.30pm on Friday 30th January, and the second at 6-7.30pm, also on Friday 30th January. If you would like to join either of the Q&A sessions, please email Rebecca to request the link (rebecca@northpennines.org.uk).

The deadline for applications is midnight, Sunday 8th February 2026. Completed applications should be emailed to Rebecca (email address as above).

Mission

To deliver a programme of inclusive and accessible arts activities which will enable people to get involved in the North Pennines lead and silver mining heritage.

The Projects

Artists are invited to put forward applications that play to their strengths and preferences for engaging with local community audiences. Any artistic method will be considered including, but not limited to, writing, painting, music, drawing, textiles, etc.

We are seeking artists/collectives who understand community engagement and are willing to engage an audience as well as delivering an activity/project. The North Pennines National Landscape team will provide support for engagement activities including advertising events and providing knowledge about the lead mining history of the North Pennines. Artists will have responsibility for securing and liaising with any specific groups which will be involved, booking venues, undertaking risk assessments, and delivering events. A short final report will be required following completion of all activities, as well as contributions to the North

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Pennines National Landscape blog and social media content. A contribution to a public exhibition of the community arts project will also be required (this can be items created by participants, but the artist(s) is responsible for ensuring items are returned to participants following the exhibition).

Projects should have a focus on the lead mining heritage of the North Pennines, but how this is explored is left up to the artists.

There are several priority themes that we are looking to explore through the 2026 arts programme, these are:

- Improving wellbeing through the arts and heritage
- Reducing barriers to arts and heritage, including accessibility, rural poverty, and rural and social isolation
- Encouraging community identity through arts and heritage
- Nature and heritage, one landscape explored through the arts

Artists should consider the following:

- Will the projects activities be online or face to face?
- The practicalities of delivering the activity regarding venue, health and safety, catering (if any). What support is needed to run the activities/events from the project staff and volunteers.
- Production of promotional copy and images to be used for webpage and Facebook posts and insertion in community newsletters and circulation to parish councils. Liaison with the North Pennines National Landscape communications team via the project staff to ensure all promotion adheres to the National Landscape's regulations and timetable.
- Production of risk assessments with support from the project staff for the activities/events.
- Photographs and recordings from the event. Written consent from participants (or parents/guardians thereof) will be required for any photographs and/or recording, the North Pennines National Landscape can provide consent forms if required.
- Liaison with our Finance and Admin Officer re the completion of supplier forms, generation of quote and submission of invoice.
- Artists are required to have Public Liability Insurance up to £5 million cover in place for the project.
- Recording and evaluation of the project, including numbers engaged, feedback from participants and artists feedback regarding the success of the activities.

Projects must take place in and focus on the North Pennines National Landscape, as well as the lead and silver mining process.

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What your application should include:

1. A completed application form, ensuring you have answered all the questions
2. An up-to-date CV
3. Three examples of your previous work, including a minimum of one example which includes community engagement work (please do not only submit links to websites and/or social media as we may not be able to view them). You may include images and video in your examples.
4. A letter of support from a previous arts project/bursary/grant etc.

Scoring Criteria

Briefs will be scored 1-5 on the following criteria, up to a maximum of 30 points:

- The innovation of your project idea (1-5 points available, based on application form answers)
- Integration of 'lead and silver mining in the North Pennines', and other priority themes into the proposed project (1-5 points available, based on application form answers)
- Your plan for how you will engage your chosen audience with this project and your work (1-5 points available, based on application form answers)
- Your plan for participants experiencing active and meaningful participation (1-5 points, based on application form answers)
- Demonstrated previous experience of working with the public to engage them in the arts (1-5 points available, based on evidence from supplied examples and CV)
- Letter of support from previous work (1-5 points available, based on letter of support)
- **Note: applicants who have been granted a bursary by the National Landscape within the last 5 years are encouraged to apply, but priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received a bursary from us.**

Please submit your application to rebecca@northpennines.org.uk by midnight, Sunday 8th February 2026. If you have any questions about the brief, please contact Rebecca on the same email address.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is there an access fund available?

A: Yes, please include access costs in the access question on the application form. These costs should not be included in the bursary/residency grant amounts. Including access requirements and costs will have no bearing on the outcome of your application.

Q: Can I include found materials from the landscape in my artworks and/or workshops?

A: Ideally not, we do not want to be encouraging people to be removing parts of the landscape. This is especially true for anything that is protected or a finite resource (for example; minerals, parts of calaminarian grasslands, etc.). Leaves, branches, etc. that have already naturally dropped from the tree/plant would be considered in limited amounts.

Q: Do I need to have the insurance and DBS check in place when I apply?

No, but it is your responsibility to arrange it as soon as possible if you are successful. We will not be able to release your grant payment until we have confirmation that you have these in place (DBS only if relevant to your project). Many arts unions offer support in arranging these and are worth exploring if you do not have them in place already.

Q: Will the North Pennines National Landscape team help me find venues and groups to work with?

We will be able to provide you with a list of options, but it will be your responsibility to make contact, organise bookings, etc.

Q: What can I do to make my application stand out?

Be innovative and excited about your idea, if you let your enthusiasm show it will come across in your application. Be specific about what you would like to do within your project/residency. Don't use jargon or assume that we will know what you're referring to. We want to have a clear understanding of what you will do in your project/residency and the groups you will be working with.

Q: What support can I expect from the North Pennines National Landscape team if I am successful?

The National Landscape team will be on hand to offer support and advice wherever possible. A site visit day will also be offered where you will meet the other successful artists on this year's programme and will be introduced to the mining heritage of the area. The team will also handle booking and advertising of your events. We can supply example risk assessments, consent forms, and evaluation forms if you have not used these previously. Where the team's workload allows, we can also join you at your events and support you in delivering them.

Q: I've never worked on an arts project before, but I do art in my spare time and would like to become a professional artist, can I still apply for the residency?

Absolutely, as long as you meet the other criteria (i.e. location, able to meet the themes, etc.), we encourage you to apply.