



SNAPSHOT – 05

ARTLINK HULL



[ARTLINKHULL.CO.UK/EVENTS/CATEGORY/EXHIBITIONS](https://artlinkhull.co.uk/events/category/exhibitions)

Artlink Hull enables the creation and exploration with, in and about communities. In particular, we work with individuals and communities experiencing disadvantage to increase the diversity of voices in the arts. We do this through commissions, projects, exhibitions, events, learning programmes and forums, working with a range of communities.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE MGETR SCHEME?

We attended the first MGETR workshop run by YVAN in July 2019. We hoped to make a claim by December 2019, looking at past exhibitions and considering making a retrospective claim, but actually started communicating with HMRC in early 2020, then Lockdown got in the way. We knew we were eligible as we are a registered charity. This means that we don't automatically have to do a tax return every year, and

so, although we were eligible that didn't mean that we were ready to make an MGETR claim, as we weren't familiar with the corporation tax return.

We started making a claim in January 2020, but got stuck with the process, first of completing a tax return, and then of completing the MGETR claim which is attached to it. We had some correspondence with the Creative Industries Tax Relief team at HMRC about making the tax return, which all got a bit convoluted, particularly because

by then we were in the middle of the Covid 19 pandemic. They had to break their usual rules on communications, and we had to agree that we would communicate with them by email. They said they would send us a Unique Tax Reference number by letter, but this never arrived at our offices, which were in Lockdown.

We attended the online workshop in May 2020, and members of the YVAN project staff had a look at the communication we have had since with HMRC.

WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL RESPONSE AFTER ATTENDING THE WORKSHOP IN 2019?

It was about confidence, building our confidence, of going 'Yes, this is okay, we're doing it. Similarly to other organisations, there was considerable worry over 'not doing it right' and feeling 'behind'. The finance officer observed that 'hand holding' to build some confidence would be very useful. With support from experienced people to stop any reinventing of the wheel. The finance officer wanted to ensure that they claimed back as much they could for the organisation and did not want to make a claim that 'messed it up'.

We were concerned about the time risk. Time and capacity. Fear of getting it wrong. Risk of spending resources: 'We don't get the money but spent time doing it'. Making sure that we have all projects in the claim that are the 'right' projects and with the right allocations.

HOW DID YOU MANAGE GATHERING THE FINANCIAL INFORMATION IN-HOUSE?

We didn't have any external support used except attendance at the YVAN Manchester day, and then attendance at the online workshop in May 2020. It is solely the Finance Officer who is taking the claim forward.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

With hindsight, we shouldn't have tried to do it ourselves, but should have asked our accountants to do it from the start. We now have had some information back from HMRC about how to do the tax return, so we are one step nearer! There is a lot of information on the HMRC website, and they have pointed us to the appropriate links, but the problem with looking at these links is, that if you're not familiar with how tax works, unfortunately, you're none the wiser, so it's been a bit of a slow process. It feels like HMRC are answering the letter of your question, but not the spirit of it, so instead of feeling like help, it feels like another barrier.

WHAT WOULD MAKE IT WORK FOR YOU?

We spoke to our accountants, who said they had no experience of completing an MGETR claim, but that they would look at the guidance. They also said that as we were a charity, we might not be eligible. We now know that we are eligible, but clearly, it would help if there was a non-technical introduction to MGETR for accountants who aren't specialists in this, to help them get started and then lead into the technical stuff, so that they can support us in making our claims.

HOW MUCH WOULD THE BENEFIT OF A CLAIM BE TO YOU?

A rough estimate, without going into all the details, but just how we decided if it was worthwhile for us to do, is that we could claim back about £5000 in a normal year.

We would tend to use any funds claimed in two main areas. Firstly, to support core running costs and organisational overheads, which are often one of the most difficult areas to properly resource. Second, we would direct a portion of funds into a central development fund. This is where our organisation sets aside a budget for seed funding and development of new projects, often involving micro-commissions and project-based employment for freelance artists.

We aim to expand our curation into the field of disability arts and digital practices, and this could help us achieve that aim.

WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD IT MAKE IF THE RATE OF TAX RELIEF WERE DOUBLED TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF COVID 19?

For Artlink as our gallery programme grows, the opportunity to recover a greater amount of exhibition related costs is to be welcomed. Budgets are always particularly tight in the programme and any such increase in recouping costs would be a great enabling factor, as we attempt to stabilise the programme post-pandemic.

TO JOIN OUR MGETR SLACK WORKSPACE, CONTACT: INFO@YVAN.ORG.UK



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: PROJECTS@YVAN.ORG.UK
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