



MFA Fine Art Bursary

The NewBridge Project and Newcastle University are pleased to announce that we are offering two bursaries for students taking the 2024 - 2026 Master of Fine Arts course at Newcastle University, starting in September 2024.

These bursaries offer an exciting and significant opportunity to prospective students who might otherwise be unable to undertake postgraduate study due to financial barriers. The bursaries cover full tuition fees for the two-year MA, as well as a stipend toward living costs of £8000 per year.

The bursaries are part of an ambitious 3-year programme of development activity led by The NewBridge Project in partnership with Newcastle University, and supported by the North of Tyne Combined Authority Skills for Growth Programme.

The bursaries are aimed at prospective students living in the North of Tyne area (Newcastle, the Borough of North Tyneside and Northumberland) who have faced barriers to accessing higher or postgraduate education. They are intended to create pathways into study for people who have experienced financial hardship or other barriers, and/or have not previously participated in higher education but have a creative practice.

The deadline to apply for this opportunity is Tuesday 7 May 2024.

We will be holding an open day on **Tuesday 9 April**. This will be an opportunity to chat to staff and students from the Master of Fine Arts course at Newcastle University about the course and your application, and to members of the NewBridge team about the bursary.

This information pack includes:

1. Background information on The NewBridge Project and Newcastle University
2. A description of the bursary, its purpose and eligibility criteria
3. Selection and eligibility criteria
4. How to apply:
 - *Details on how to apply*
 - *The selection process*
 - *Further support and queries*
5. A timeline for applications and selection



About The NewBridge Project



The NewBridge Project is an active artist-led community that supports artists, curators, and communities through the provision of space for creative practice, curatorial opportunities and an ambitious artist-led programme of exhibitions, commissions, artist development and events.

The NewBridge Project was established in 2010 to provide exchange and support in an engaged community of artists. Our building houses 120 artists and numerous project and production spaces. Our public spaces, which include a gallery, bookshop and event spaces, are places where artists and local communities can come together to work, learn and socialise with each other.

We aim to deliver an outstanding programme in consultation with members, artists, and the community. This creates a programme that reflects the diversity of contemporary art practice, is responsive to the environment within which it exists, builds solidarity, and places community-centred, experimental, collaborative, and socially conscious programming at its heart.

Support for artists is at the heart of our work, and we work with artists at all stages of their careers, providing support through three programmes that provide creative, personal, and professional development. These programmes are created by artists, for artists, and are responsive to different needs and interests.



About Newcastle University

Newcastle University's Master of Fine Arts is a two-year full-time studio-based course. It's designed for fine art graduates and those with other backgrounds to progress their position as practitioners in the contemporary art world. It also offers a solid grounding for those hoping to progress to PhD degree study.

Find out more about the MFA here: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/5808f/> and about Fine Art here: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/sacs/fine-art/>

About the bursaries

The NewBridge Project and Newcastle University will be offering two bursaries for the 2024 – 2026 Master of Fine Arts course at Newcastle University.

The bursaries are intended to support creative practitioners to develop their creativity, progress their careers, and to improve their skills and networks.

The bursaries are aimed at prospective students living in the North of Tyne area (Newcastle, the Borough of North Tyneside and Northumberland) who have faced barriers to accessing higher or postgraduate education. They are intended to support study for people who have experienced financial hardship or other barriers, and/or have not previously participated in higher education but have a creative practice.

The bursaries are funded by the North of Tyne Combined Authority Skills for Growth Programme.

They are part of wider 3-year programme of development activity, which builds upon The NewBridge Project and Newcastle University's longstanding working relationship, which has seen them collaborate around teaching and career development opportunities for students and artists, and on research projects particularly related to community embedded practices and artist workspace.

An Overview of the bursary funding available

There are **two bursaries** available for **two students** starting in September 2024 who will complete their studies in summer 2026.

Each bursary will:

- Cover home fees for both years of study, currently £10,800 per year (any rise in fees due to inflation will be covered by the bursary in the second year of study)
- A stipend to support with living costs of £8000 per year.

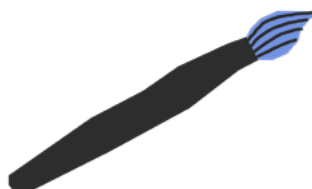
The bursaries (fees and living cost stipend) will be administered by Newcastle University. Fees will be paid directly by the fund on behalf of the student and the stipend towards living cost will be paid once per term at the start of each term.

Eligibility criteria

Criteria	Further Details
Live in the North of Tyne Area, which comprises Newcastle City Council, the Borough of North Tyneside, and Northumberland County Council.	This is because the funding comes from the NTCA devolved authority and is aimed specifically at supporting people who are residents in the area. It is a condition of the funding which covers this bursary that the people benefitting from the funding must live in Newcastle, Northumberland, and North Tyneside. Proof of address will be needed to show eligibility.

<p>Remain resident within the NTCA area during the course of your studies.</p>	<p>As outlined above, the funding which covers this bursary is aimed specifically at people resident in the area.</p> <p>Applicants should be resident within NTCA area throughout the period of the bursary to remain eligible for continued funding.</p> <p>Proof of address will be needed to show ongoing eligibility on a biannual basis.</p>
<p>Have been awarded a place to study on the MFA at Newcastle University beginning in autumn 2024.</p>	<p>The bursary is specific to the Master of Fine Art course at Newcastle University. When you apply for this opportunity, your application will be assessed first by the admissions team at the University, then if successful at stage 1 will be assessed by The NewBridge Project for the bursary.</p> <p>We want to encourage people who face barriers to studying an MFA to do so by offering this bursary. We understand one of these barriers may be not having an undergraduate degree or having an undergraduate degree in a non-creative subject. These candidates can be considered for a place on the MFA on an individual basis by the Newcastle University recruitment team. We can offer support to these candidates with the application process.</p>
<p>Be eligible to pay home fees.</p>	<p>This is a condition of the funding which covers the bursary. You cannot be an international student.</p>
<p>Have the intention of completing your studies within two years (the duration of the course) from starting in Autumn 2022.</p>	<p>This is because the funding comes from NTCA and as a condition of the funding we have a time limit on project activity.</p>
<p>Have the right to work in the UK</p>	<p>This is a condition of the funding which covers the bursary.</p>

<p>Be facing financial and social barriers to undertaking post graduate study, which without financial support would mean you would not be able to undertake postgraduate study</p>	<p>The bursaries exist to address a specific need and barrier identified through previous work supporting skills and career development.</p> <p>This is the need to undertake postgraduate study to develop a career in the cultural sector but be unable to do so due to financial and social barriers. We outlined the eligibility criteria in our funding application and funding was awarded on this basis. Therefore, this is an essential eligibility criteria of the bursary.</p>
<p>Have not graduated from any postgraduate study programme in the UK or elsewhere</p>	<p>A postgraduate qualification (even in another subject) offers experience and opportunities which are not afforded to those without a postgraduate qualification. Therefore, to maximise the impact of limited funding, the bursaries are only open to those who have not previously undertaken postgraduate study in any subject.</p>
<p>Have a commitment to creative practice</p>	<p>We understand people undertake postgraduate study at different stages in their life and career, especially when taking non-traditional routes to working in the cultural sector. Although applicants do not need to have completed a qualification in a creative subject or hold an undergraduate degree, we do ask that applicants have a creative practice.</p> <p>Your creative practice does not have to be well established, particularly in relation to the undertaking of professional opportunities. You should evidence ongoing interest in, and commitment to, making art in the MFA application.</p>



How to apply



The deadline for your application is Tuesday 7 May.

There are two parts to the application and selection process, one to Newcastle University for your place on the course, and one to The NewBridge Project who will award the bursaries.

Please use this deadline to apply for both the Master's and the bursary.

Please read this document carefully before applying. It outlines how to apply, the selection criteria and process and the timeline involved.

1. Application to the Master of Fine Art at Newcastle University

To be considered for the bursary, you must have been offered a place on the MFA course at Newcastle University to start in September 2024. This is a separate application process which follows the standard Newcastle University admissions process, but with an extended deadline of 7 May 2024.

You must apply through the university portal, and can find more information about how to apply here: <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/degrees/5808f/>

The academic team in the Fine Art department will assess applicants firstly through a review of a digital portfolio and personal statement, followed by an invitation to interview.

Successful candidates will then be assessed for a bursary by staff at The NewBridge Project.

What you will need for your university application:

- **Portfolio**

You need to submit a completed online application form together with 15-30 images of your studio work in the form of a digital portfolio. You should collate your images in a PowerPoint, PDF or Word document and attach this to your online application. This document may also include URL links to videos. Work should be labelled and briefly described – size, date, materials etc.

You should include recent work, but you may also wish to submit other work that you feel is relevant and which supports your application.

- **Personal Statement**

In your application you need to provide a statement about you and your current studio work. You should state how as an artist you hope to develop your practice while on the MFA, as well as outlining your reasons for wanting to study at postgraduate level at Newcastle. We are looking for evidence of an independent and thoughtful creative practice, and for motivated and ambitious individuals who are looking for a challenging and inspiring educational and creative environment.

2. **Application for the Bursary**



Applicants who have been successful at stage 1 of the application process will then have their bursary applications considered by The NewBridge Project. Applicants applying for a bursary should submit the following documents to applications@thenewbridgeproject.com by Tuesday 7 May:

- A personal statement (1 page of A4 or 5 min video) outlining:
 - The barriers you have experienced which have prevented you from undertaking post graduate study.*
 - How undertaking an MFA at this time as part of this bursary scheme would support you to develop your creative practice and career.
- An up-to-date CV (no more than 2 pages in length)
- A completed Equality and Diversity form – please note that this form will not be kept separate from your application and will be used in conjunction with your personal statement to support us to understand socio-economic background of the applicant.
- Evidence of residence in the NTCA area *

The selection criteria for the bursaries are solely based on the selection criteria outlined below:

- The applicant has faced social barriers to postgraduate study and developing a career / arts practice.
- The applicant has faced financial barriers to postgraduate study and developing a career / arts practice.
- The applicant can show that undertaking an MFA at this time as part of this bursary scheme will support them to develop their creative practice and career.
- The applicant can demonstrate a commitment to remaining in the North of Tyne region and building a career in the North East upon graduation.

* We understand and recognise that population groups and people with specific experiences are more likely to face barriers to developing an arts practice/ career in the arts and / or undertaking post graduate study. Such as people from the global majority, from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and/or who are the first generation in their family to attend university or disabled people. We appreciate that a range of life experiences can be considered barriers too. Therefore, we ask applicants to self-describe the barriers they have faced.



Further support and queries

If you are thinking of applying for the role but still have some questions, we are holding an [OPEN DAY](#) on Tuesday 9 April, 1 - 6pm, where you can attend an open drop in between 1 - 3pm to chat with staff from Newcastle University, NewBridge and students currently on the MFA programme, or you can sign up for a short one-to-one chat with Rebecca Huggan (Director, NewBridge) and Jane Millican (MFA Degree Programme Director) between 3.30 - 6pm.

Please book a space to attend the open drop-in, or to sign up for a one-to-one via Eventbrite [here](#).

As the bursary is aimed at people who have faced barriers to postgraduate study, we are aware people who want to apply may not have the experience needed to create an application for the MFA and bursary. Therefore, the open day should be able to offer you advice on this, and where possible staff at The NewBridge Project can offer further support on making your application.

We can also answer written questions via email, please send your query to applications@thenewbridgeproject.com with the subject heading MFA Bursary Query. Please don't leave it too late with any questions though, so we can make sure we have time to get back to you.

Timeline

Deadline for MFA course applications	Tuesday 7 May 2024
Course applications reviewed	May 2024
MFA Interviews	May 2024
Shortlisting for bursary	June 2024
Successful applicants notified	Mid June 2024
First instalment of bursary paid	September 2024
MFA course starts	September 2024