

## Thinking about applying for Strategic Touring?



Firstly, there's nothing that I'm going to say here which isn't evident from reading the guidance for the Programme, or talking to a Relationship Manager before you apply, both of which are essential. So there's no secret formula, but this might help you to work out if the [Strategic Touring Programme](#) is the right one for you, and how to best approach putting together an application.

### Top Tips

1. Read the [guidance](#) before you go too far down the line. Quite often, applicants have a fully formed idea or project and then go and look for the funding programme which is the best match. The strongest applications start with the Programme, and respond to the aims.
2. Don't automatically think that Strategic Touring is the funding for you. Touring can also be funded through [Grants for the arts](#) (unless you're an NPO). Strategic Touring has very specific objectives and is about the greater good. The analogy of club versus country is useful. If your over-riding priority is your organisation and its ambitions, Strategic Touring might not be for you. If you're genuinely interested in partnership working between the demand side (programmers, venues, audiences) and supply (creators of the touring work), then it might well be.
3. It's about the Arts Council's Goal 2 - the 'Everyone' part of [Great Art and Culture for Everyone](#). Great Art and Culture is critical, but it's only the first hurdle. Then it's about being convincing that this is the right, best art and culture for the target audience, and that it's making a significant impact to the landscape after the tour has been and gone. It's perfectly ok to apply for funding which includes making a new show, and we have funded plenty of applications that do this, but be ready to demonstrate why that's the best way of delivering the Programme's aims. Remounting might be more expensive, and has its own challenges, but by touring tried and tested work there should be evidence of demand from and suitability for venues and audiences.
4. Talking - Talk to people who've [successfully applied](#) to get a sense of what you're letting yourself in for. Talk to potential partners that you know; it's often good to work with people you are familiar with, but also talk to potential partners that you don't know and broaden your horizons.
5. Re-read the [guidance](#)! – Keep it freshly and firmly in mind as the project develops.
6. Remember that you don't have to deliver all of the aims of the Programme in one application.
7. You don't have to do the biggest tour. A local, in depth, short-term project can deliver brilliantly.
8. Think about the audience at every step of the way – 'Who is it for?' is at the heart of Strategic Touring.
9. Get the right team – Make sure artists, marketing and audience development, touring expertise, venues etc are all fully on board and committed, and that there is a shared understanding of what that commitment entails.
10. Be realistic about timings – A successful application takes a significant amount of preparation, so give yourself a good period of time to develop an application.
11. Talk to a Relationship Manager at Arts Council England – to test your ideas, get advice, and to make sure the project is a good fit for Strategic Touring.
12. Think about value for money, sustainability, sharing the learning. It's amazing how many applications suggest that everything will suddenly become sustainable as soon as the project funding ends, yet show no sign of a decreasing dependency on funding during the life of the grant!
13. Don't assume the person reading your application knows your work. Make the case, with concise evidence, for your track record.
14. Aim high – How can you leave the touring landscape looking better than you found it?