

How to get ££££££s

Take what's yours

Grab any benefit you are entitled to. If you're not sure if you're entitled to anything, explore <https://www.turn2us.org.uk>. If you are a cripple or a carer, get an advocate to help you navigate the system, try <https://www.voiceability.org>, if they can't help they will know who can. If anyone owes you money, get them to cough up.

Wise up

Find out about how things work, how things are run. Watch documentaries, take notes. How do people work the system and play the game? You don't have to like it, in fact you will probably hate it, but you need to understand it. Identify key agencies and organisations, get on their industry mailing lists, and follow them on social media. Identify people and organisations who can help you get money, some people do this sort of thing for a living and they might be able to help you.

Get evil

Make a list of all the practitioners you know and bookmark their websites. Ignore anyone who doesn't have a website. Categorise the bookmarks into: role models, peers, successful-but-mediocre. Delete all the others. Never share this with anyone because you will be run out of town. See who's funded them. Put anyone whose art is paid for through the Bank of Mum and Dad in another folder and ignore them unless you are desperate. Bookmark those funders' websites and make a spreadsheet of all their application dates and processes.

Go through the hell of applying for things

Get through the soul-sucking process of applying, being rejected, being long- and short-listed for things and rare occasions of being funded and having to be grateful over and over and over again. Find ways of coping with being demoralised. Do not measure the value of your work against this ugly process. Be gentle with yourself if you need to use your identity as a box-ticker, it is the system that is exclusive and wrong, not you, you are enough as you are. Have snacks, tissues, friendly faces etc on hand to help you get through the grimness. Accept my permission to rage and grind your teeth.

Find other ways

- Reappraise what artistic success means to you. What's your work about anyway? Do you need to take the ACE route? That's not the only way of being an artist, in fact it's a really limited and shit way. Use your imagination and make other possibilities for you and people like you.
- Crowd-fund it, and/or go to the library and work your way through the Directory of Grant-Making Trusts.

- Find a way of making a pile of savings (haha! I know!) that you can use for your practice. Alternative but problematic options: amass more debt, do crime.
- Make work that doesn't need funding. Learn how to sell things that are cheap to produce so that you are self-sustaining. Don't hate yourself for this, it is a survival skill in these times, we'd all prefer things to be different and you can still work to end capitalism.
- Side-hustle the creative work or side-hustle your wage work, let them co-exist.
- I've done all of the above. I also want to thank all the sex workers who have taught me so much about making art and surviving.