

# RPS INSTRUMENT PURCHASE GRANTS APPLICATION GUIDELINES 2021



*The following guidelines are for music colleges, but may be useful for applicants to read directly.*

The Royal Philharmonic Society provides funding to music students – prioritising first year undergraduates – to help them to purchase instruments of a quality appropriate for their training at the following music colleges:

Guildhall School of Music and Drama  
Leeds Conservatoire  
Royal Academy of Music  
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
Royal College of Music

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland  
Royal Northern College of Music  
Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama  
Trinity Laban

Each college is invited annually to put forward the names of up to five selected, talented students whose progress, in the opinion of their Head of Faculty and their teacher, is being impeded by a poor instrument and who have limited financial resources available to them.

Applicants usually identify a particular instrument they would like, providing details of this when they apply. We appreciate that ongoing lockdown and closure of shops/dealers/suppliers may limit their ability to do this, particularly to trial an instrument in person. While we still expect applicants to detail an instrument that in principle they might like to purchase, this year we have slightly adapted our terms and conditions below to acknowledge this.

## **Who can apply for a grant?**

Due to limited funding and the volume of applications we receive, grants are prioritised for existing first year undergraduates, due to enter their second year in Autumn 2021.

It is very rare for grants to be given to students at later stages of study and we can only consider such applications in truly exceptional cases fully explained by the college. Equally we can only consider applications for those due to enter their first undergraduate year in Autumn 2021 where need for a new instrument is urgent and the quality of the candidate's current instrument is already well known to the college, possibly by prior acquaintance through the college's junior department.

## **What can they apply for?**

Please note, priority is given to students needing to purchase a principal study instrument (for string instruments, this includes bows). Given the demand for these, it is only in exceptional cases that we can consider supporting the purchase of an auxiliary or second study instrument.

Though it differs year-on-year, we aim annually to give a total of around £20,000 in grants. Individual grants are usually between £750 and £1,500 and very rarely exceed £3,000. Students

applying are asked to bear such figures in mind and only submit applications for instruments that they can afford with such a contribution from us and whatever other funds they can amass, and that are suitable to their needs at this stage in their development.

We regret applications for keyboard instruments cannot be considered.

## **What is required to apply?**

Each college must take the lead in collating and submitting applications. We cannot accept applications directly from students. Due to limited funding, each college should put forward **no more than five** students for consideration. It is entirely at the discretion of each college how they invite or select applications from students to submit.

### ***Application form***

Each student applying should complete a copy of our application form sent to colleges. Please ensure you have the up-to-date 2021 form with this year at the top. The form should be completed by the student themselves, not by parents, guardians, college staff or others. They should type their answers into the form on a computer (not write answers by hand) and return their completed and saved file to the college.

Both the student and college should ensure the application form is completed fully before submitting it to us. The panel will not be able to assess applications which are incomplete or missing key information.

The college should bind each individual's application form, followed by their page of references (as detailed below) into **one** PDF per applicant. This can be done using a free online merging tool such as [www.pdfmerge.com](http://www.pdfmerge.com). The PDF should be labelled as follows:

*RPS IPG Applicant's forename and surname*

Individual applications not bound and submitted in this way will not be accepted.

### ***References***

The college should gather references from the applicant's instrumental teacher and Head of Faculty. These should be individualised, and reference the student's ability and specific need for a new instrument. A general reference without this is unlikely to help the applicant's cause and will directly affect their chance of being selected.

Both references should be submitted on one side of A4 with the name and role of each referee clearly stated. A signature for these is not required. The references should then be bound into one PDF with the application form as detailed above.

If for any reason, one or more of the references cannot be included in this way, you or the applicant should email us at [admin@philharmonicsociety.uk](mailto:admin@philharmonicsociety.uk) to let us know, well in advance of our closing date of Tuesday 27 April 2021.

For your ease, we no longer require a formal reference or approval from the Principal.

## **When is the closing date?**

The college must send completed application forms (each bound as an individual PDF with the student's references) to [admin@philharmonicsociety.uk](mailto:admin@philharmonicsociety.uk) no later than **11am on Tuesday 27 April 2021**.

## **Terms and Conditions**

On receipt of all applications, we assemble a panel comprising select members of the RPS Board and Council and external experts to review them.

We aim to advise music colleges of the outcome by the end of June. We will do so to the college's designated contact who submitted the applications and notify them of next steps. Please note the Royal Philharmonic Society's decision is final. While the Society reserves the right to make additional enquiries about any of the applications it receives, it cannot enter into any other discussion or correspondence, nor give reasons for decisions made by the panel.

Our notification to music colleges will explain how students should then contact us directly to confirm that they accept the terms of the grant. At this stage we will advise them on how the grant may be issued, but in brief:

1. The grant recipient (or a parent/guardian) may pay the seller for their instrument in full then send the RPS a copy of the receipt as proof of the transaction. We will then directly reimburse the recipient (or parent/guardian) for the agreed amount.
2. Alternatively the grant recipient may pay the seller for their instrument, less the amount of their grant. The seller may then invoice the RPS for the balance. The invoice must clearly state the full purchase price of the instrument and confirm that the recipient has paid the remaining amount. The RPS will then pay the grant direct to the seller.

If the recipient is unable to pay by either of these methods, they must notify us well in advance of the purchase, so we may explore if other options are possible.

A grant may only be used for the purchase of the instrument stated in the application. If, for any reason, the student subsequently decides to purchase an alternative instrument, or if the price stated in the application changes, approval must first be obtained by us. We acknowledge this may be more likely this year owing to the pandemic, especially if an applicant has not had chance to see and test their desired instrument in person before applying. In such circumstances, we aim to be as flexible as we can in permitting them to use the grant to purchase an equivalent instrument where needs be.

Usually, we expect instruments to be purchased within six months of a grant being approved, and the RPS informed by the student as soon as the purchase is complete. The RPS reserves the right to withdraw a grant if the purchase has not been completed within this time, unless our prior approval has been obtained. We are happy to extend this period should continued lockdown from June 2021 onwards prevent an applicant completing their purchase, so long as they notify us of this likelihood.

Students using an instrument bought with the assistance of a grant from the Royal Philharmonic Society are expected to acknowledge this in their biographies and any printed programme for the duration of their studies.

As we will proudly regard grant recipients as RPS beneficiaries, we may ask in return that recipients help us tell our Members and the wider public about how we are supporting them, most likely in the form of a blog or video accounting their story that we can share online.

The information provided in applications will only be used in accordance with our Privacy Policy as found on [our website](#).

### **Any further queries?**

You are welcome to contact the RPS on [admin@philharmonicsociety.uk](mailto:admin@philharmonicsociety.uk) or 020 7287 0019 (our voicemail will be checked each weekday whilst we work remotely, and we will reply to messages as soon as we can).