

Third Sector Community Support Fund 2021/22

Background

In 2019-20 West Lothian Council agreed to an interim grant process, ring fenced to those organisations who had received funding through the rolling Service Funding Agreement process that had been in place up until 2018/19. This would last for one year and would be replaced by a new approach for 2020/21, one that would be open to all local third sector organisations. Timescale constraints meant that this was not achieved and funding was rolled over for one more year to cover 2020/21 to allow time to agree a replacement process for 2021/22.

The new process has been agreed following consultation with representatives of the third sector around the overarching principle to provide time limited investment in organisations best placed to deliver for the communities of West Lothian, addressing both key Community Planning priorities and ensuring that the recipient has the resources it needs, within the confines of the funding available, to support our communities. The priorities identified are also the result of the effects that the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic has had on our communities and the issues that are coming from that or are likely to do so.

The total funding available for 2021/22 is £400,000.

What are the priorities that we are looking to address?

The new grant scheme is open to all properly constituted third sector organisations in West Lothian that can deliver work that supports the aims of the fund. The fund aims to support the resilience of our communities recovering from COVID 19 with the focus of the key areas identified through the Community Planning process that are likely to be the focus for community support in the coming months and possibly years. These areas were identified through data analysis, partners shared information and confirmed through an online survey of community organisations and partners which was presented to the Community Planning Partnership Board on 30 September. This can be viewed [here](#) on Coins.

From this work three main areas that this fund will need to address were identified. These are listed below, with some examples provided, although these are not exhaustive (also see above documents):

- income and employment;
 - supporting people into work/into positive destinations;
 - young people (attainment/education/ training etc)
 - projects that address poverty related matters.

- physical and mental health and wellbeing: including:
 - addressing long term illness
 - isolation/loneliness
 - general health (prevention)
 - young people
 - older people,
 - people with protected characteristics
 - children and families with disabilities

- housing and homelessness issues;
 - prevention of homelessness;
 - youth homelessness;
 - sustaining tenancies

Partners are also focussed on supporting the economy and business. This is being addressed through the West Lothian Economic Recovery Plan and partnerships are in place to support much of this work. However, innovative ideas that provide clear additionality will be considered.

Whilst not specifically detailed we are aware that many third sector organisations have, due to the circumstances adapted to the use of new and existing digital approaches and again this is an area that is likely to develop going forward.

The focus of the new grant scheme is likely to be around health and wellbeing, with particular emphasis on supporting our most vulnerable communities, those in the bottom 20% , Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data zones (these are principally in the following areas: Addiewell, Armadale, Bathgate, Blackburn, Bridgend, Craigshill, Dedridge, Fauldhouse, Knightsridge, Ladywell, Polbeth, Stoneyburn and Whitburn plus a two areas in Uphall and Deans & Carmondean). See the Scottish Government's [interactive map](#) of the areas for more details.

The fund will also focus on key thematic groups, for example young people, families, older people, people with protected characteristics.

We are keen that applications help develop/strengthen partnership working between public, third sector and business sectors. As such we will look for evidence of this and how your work or project fits. For example, you could explain how it links with the [Anti-Poverty Action Plan](#), the [Economic Recovery Plan](#), the [Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan](#) and local Regeneration Planning work. Moving forward the Health and Wellbeing issues that are clearly coming through will be picked up by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

Factoring in the effect of COVID 19

It is understood that the effects of COVID 19 are going affect us for some time and this funding is targeting support at these key areas that partners and communities have identified. We understand that things can change quickly and as such it is appreciated that some flexibility is likely to be needed and that asking applicants to definitively identify what they will deliver between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022 is not straightforward at this time.

It is appreciated that applicants can only apply based on how their organisation anticipates what they can deliver during the funding period but that they may have to adapt and change depending of the position at the at time. Therefore, we will be mindful and flexible around this in practice. However, you should be as clear as you can be to how you may adapt, essentially a level of scenario planning. Part of the decision process will take this into account as we will not want to fund something that cannot be adapted or be deliverable An example might be around face to face contact requiring a venue versus digital contact.

How much can I apply for?

Whilst you will need to cost your application to suit your identified needs. You must clearly show why you are asking for the amount identified. However, you should be aware that applications in excess of £50,000 will not be considered.

One caveat to this relates to consideration of innovative consortium bids. Such bids may apply for a higher amount and in such cases will be considered on the specific merits and how this might affect the ability to support a range of applications. We have not specified a top level for this to allow for applicants to make a value for money case. Consortium bids must have a lead partner.

Balance of Funding

Given the amount available and the likely high level of demand we are also looking for applications that maximise the funding being made available to support our communities. It is unlikely that an applicant looking for 100% funding will be successful. Applicants will be expected to show how the funding will support delivery of a service or how it can enable projects that utilise other funding identified by the applicant thereby showing how the contribution of the Council through this fund helps to deliver that larger service provision. There is no specified percentage for this but this will be considered as part of the decision process.

To be clear we will expect to see either:

- where it is a new project that should be funded through a mix of funding (external/self generated etc.) with the Council contributing a percentage of the total cost: OR
- That the council is contributing a percentage to support the applicant's ability to provide the service or project where those elements are vital but not supported or funded directly by other funders. This may involve some core costs for example.

You will need to evidence this in the application.

You should think about proportionality when putting your application together to be clear that the amount being asked for is justified by the number of beneficiaries or level of support, and clearly shows value for money.

What can the funding be used for?

You can only use the funding to pay for costs associated with delivering what is set out in your application. This can be for a wide range of costs both to develop and run a new project or can also cover core costs to help the organisations deliver ongoing work as long as it delivers to the above priorities. It is essentially a revenue grant scheme but some capital costs can be considered. These costs can include the following items:

- Staffing
- Core costs such as office management and administration
- Volunteer costs e.g. travel expenses
- Equipment and materials where clearly evidenced as crucial to delivery of the work as outlined in the application
- Hire of venues or rental of premises and related costs
- Other costs, including core costs

If you are including core costs you should itemise these to be clear what these are:

- how this is currently funded;
- why it is required;
- why it is important; and
- the difference it makes to your work.

How to apply

To ensure each organisation has an equal opportunity to demonstrate how the work it wants funded in 2021/22 will impact on the priorities identified, applications for funding must be made using the application form which accompanies this guidance document.

Completed applications and required documentation should be returned by email to the Community Planning and Regeneration Team at the following email address:

RegenerationTeam@westlothian.gov.uk

This should be no later than:

- **12.00 (noon) on Wednesday, 11th November 2020.**

Any application received beyond that date/time will not be eligible for consideration unless in exceptional circumstances.

All applicants will have to show what the funding will be used for. A maximum word count has been set per section. You **must** stick to this and be clear, concise and where possible, use bullet points. To be fair to all applicants any words over the word limit will **not be** considered. If your project comprises more than one discrete element please treat and describe them individually.

As part of the application process you will be asked to provide the following information:

A general summary of your project which outlines and identifies:

- The need for the funding support;
- Who will benefit;
- How it will align with and contribute to the priorities that you have selected.
- How it links to other funding you have identified and/or other projects you will be delivering, and
- How you have considered the sustainability of the work

Outcomes for the project which outline:

- What you want to achieve; what changes or difference will the funding we give you make to the people and communities that you are targeting?
- Your planned activities: What measurable programmes, projects or activities you will design, use and deliver to achieve your outcomes? (For example a training course is an activity; community engagement is also an activity. You should also show how the project is going to be advertised and promoted and beneficiaries recruited/targeted/accessed).

Outcome indicators for the project which demonstrate:

- How you will measure your success?
- How you will show you are achieving or will achieve your stated outcomes?

Costs which clearly show:

Your application should clearly show how you have costed your project with a general breakdown of the resources you require e.g. staff, rent, equipment, training/course materials etc.

However, as stated above we accept that the effects of COVID 19 mean flexibility will be necessary so again we accept that the initial breakdown may be indicative and open to changes. The key is the delivery of the work.

As the funding that you receive is public money you will be asked to report back at the end of the funding period to show how the funding has been utilised and be able to provide supporting evidence (i.e. pay slips, timesheets, invoices, bank statements etc.) should you be asked.

How will the application be assessed?

All applications will be assessed by a panel made up of council officers and external representatives. That panel will draw on expert advice from officers from the Council and Community Planning partners to ensure that the application being considered addresses local

strategic priorities, builds on or complements other provision and does not duplicate other provision already in place. The clearer you can be in your application on this will make this easier for the panel to consider.

The panel will also consider the applicant's financial health and governance arrangements.

Please be aware that you ***must*** submit all requested documentation by the deadline or your application will not be submitted to the panel for assessment.

Officers may contact you with supplementary questions for the purposes of clarification both before the panel meets and possibly after.

The panel will meet in late November / early December and applicant will be informed of the outcome by the week ending 18 December 2020

What happens if the application is successful?

If you are successful, you will receive an offer letter from us via email that will outline how much we are investing, the terms of the offer and the methods of monitoring our investment.

Please note that you may not be offered the full amount requested. However, where this is the case officers will detail the panel's reasoning for this decision.

All funding is reliant on you signing a Conditions of Grant agreement. Funding will be paid directly into your bank account. Please note that no funding will be provided until the Conditions of Grant agreement is signed.

Monitoring

All organisations that receive funding will be required to complete a monitoring form. Details of which will be included with the award letter which must be completed and submitted at the end of the financial year.

Copies of the monitoring form will accompany your funding award letter and conditions of grant so you will be clear of the requirements before you sign the offer. **This will cover both your performance in relation to your outcomes and financial monitoring.**

What happens if the application is unsuccessful?

If you are unsuccessful in your application, feedback will be provided as to the reasons why.

However, the decision that we make is final and there is no process for appeal. Council officers will offer support and provide advice on alternative sources of funding.

Additional conditions

Additional conditions that will apply to the offer will include:

- Right of access to organisation's financial records to ensure the funding is being used for the purposes it is granted for
- The council can reclaim funding if it can be shown that it has not been used in accordance with the application and with conditions of funding agreement. We will not reclaim funding if it can be shown that there is no fault on the part of the organisation.

Other conditions appropriate to our investment may also be included in the Offer Letter and Funding Agreement.

Help and Advice

If you require further information or advice on your application please contact the Community Planning and Regeneration Team at (regenerationteam@westlothian.gov.uk) and we will get back to you.

Where your service is based on a specific geographical location it is likely to be your local Community Regeneration Officer who will contact you.