**Grant Information Leaflet**

**UKSPF - Investment in Community Capacity Building Grants**

**Introduction**

Herefordshire Council recognises the important and valuable contribution that our vibrant Community and Voluntary sector makes to the lives of residents across the county. This Community Capacity Building Grant aims to build on this to deliver the aims and objectives of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Through the Fund, we want to enable community and voluntary groups to access funding for projects that they can demonstrate will make a difference in their local neighbourhoods.

This document is the official and comprehensive guidance to this grant. It is essential that you fully read this document so you understand what types of projects we are looking for, what the criteria of the grant~~s~~ are, and what you will be expected to do if you are awarded funding.

**The Fund**

These grants respond to the UKSPF Community and Place investment priority, which aims to:

* Strengthen our social fabric and foster a sense of local pride and belonging
* Build pride in place and increase life chances in our local communities
* Build resilient and safe neighbourhoods

**Outcomes of the fund:**

The Fund has the following overarching outcomes:

* People and communities have access to services, support and opportunities that improve their lives and well-being.
* People and communities are more self-reliant and are better able to identify ways to improve and take control of their lives and well-being.
* People are better able to gain the skills, capacity and confidence to play an active role in their communities.
* People and communities are better able to influence and participate in decision making and service development.
* People and communities are better able to identify and deliver solutions that meet their needs.
* People and communities are better able to participate in the social, economic and cultural life in Herefordshire

**Priorities of the fund**

We have purposefully kept the criteria for this grant scheme wide to allow the community to develop creative projects that meet local need, but they must contribute to the Community and Place theme set out in Herefordshire’s UKSPF Investment Plan and therefore, projects must be able to show how they will:

* Be community-based
* Improve your community
* Improve people’s satisfaction with where they live
* Increase the number of people engaging with community activity in your neighbourhood
* Help improve the health and wellbeing of people living in your community
* Help improve the quality of life of people affected by the cost of living crisis

**How much is available?**

* The minimum award is £1,000
* The maximum award is £15,000 per application, regardless of the number of organisations collaborating on a project
* Applications may be for revenue funding only, (i.e. not for buildings or large capital purchases).

**Eligibility**

* This Fund is open to Community and Third Sector organisations that deliver locally within Herefordshire and which engage local people in the design and development of services to meet their needs. These can be new or established services
* Principally this covers:
* Charities, voluntary, community and not-for-profit organisations including Community Interest Organisations (CIOs) and social enterprises who are formally constituted/ incorporated groups i.e. registered with charity commission, companies house or have a constitution and bank account in the organisations name
* State and independent schools (as long as your project benefits and involves the community and does not deliver activities that are part of the standard curriculum)
* Town and parish councils

All applications will need to be able to demonstrate their organisational status and have a bank account in the same name.

What can the grant be used for?

You can apply for a grant to fund any activity, service or equipment that will increase capacity to improve the lives of residents and communities. This could include:

* Community support events and activities
* Community engagement and outreach
* Activities that support improved mental health and wellbeing
* Venue hire costs for additional service provision
* Transport costs to support community capability to attend and event or specific service delivery
* Marketing and promotion costs and campaigns that can demonstrate added value
* Community consultation and service shaping exercises;
* Sector skills sharing and collaboration work
* Volunteering and retention activities
* Project Staff costs

**What costs are NOT eligible?**

The grant will not fund the following items / activities:

* Purchase of alcohol
* Contingency costs, loans, endowments or interest
* Paying someone else to write your application for you
* Profit-making or fundraising activities
* VAT you can reclaim
* Legal fees
* Promotion of religious beliefs
* Statutory activities
* Projects that do not benefit people living in Herefordshire
* Political activities
* Capital expenditure

Please note that this list is not exhaustive; we welcome applications from all kinds of projects that deliver tangible improvements to our local communities where people live, study and work.

**Timeline**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stage** | **Date** |
| Community grants open to applications | 29/04/2024 |
| Community grants closed to applications | 9am 03/06/2024 |
| Successful applicants notified, and sign Grant Funding Agreement | Ideally within a month, depending on the level of applications. |
| Latest date by which projects must be completed and end-of-project reports submitted | 28/02/2025 |

**How to apply**

* Download an application from our website :
* Email UKSPFCommunityGrants@herefordshire.gov.uk

Please email the completed form to the address above clearly stating in the subject heading UKSPF Community Grant Scheme

Help with you application

If you need some help with developing your project ideas you can contact the Talk Community Team via email: TalkCommunityEnquiries@herefordshire.gov.uk and your local community development officer can support you

What happens next?

When we receive your application and project costs, we will acknowledge receipt.

The grant application will be assessed by a project panel who will make recommendations either for the application to be approved or rejected, or the panel may ask for further information before a decision can be made. This will require approval.

Grant applications are assessed on their individual merit by the project panel against the grant funding eligibility criteria, the impact of the project and that it demonstrates value for money. All applications are subject to funding availability.

Based on your application and any further information you may have been asked to provide, we will advise you of the decision to either:

* Offer a grant; or
* Offer a grant with some specific conditions; or
* Reject the application detailing the reasons why the application was not accepted.

**When can I start my project?**

If your application meets the eligibility criteria and you are offered a grant, you will receive an offer letter setting out how much grant has been approved and detailing any specific terms and conditions. If you are happy to accept the grant offer and associated conditions, you will need to return a signed copy within 10 working days.

**What are the grant offer terms and conditions?**

If you are offered a grant, you will be sent terms and conditions specific to your project.

Key points to consider are:

* You should not start your project until you have signed the acceptance of grant and returned it to the Herefordshire Council and the grant will not pay for any work that has already started.
* You need to keep all paperwork relating to your project. i.e. all invoices, receipts and bank statements as they will need to be submitted as evidence with your claims.
* Information relating to user feedback and progress towards the outputs of your project should also be kept and will need to be submitted at the end of the projects, or an agreed time after the project is complete.
* The grant will only be paid on invoices or receipts that have been paid, and are dated after the offer letter has been agreed by all parties.

Other specific conditions of grant will be included within your offer letter

**What happens if my project/ budget changes?**

* Herefordshire Council won’t be able to give you more grant money if your costs increase, but will consider variations within the agreed budget as long as these are approved in advance.
* You need to notify Herefordshire Council in writing as soon as you realise that you may need to make some changes to your project or budget in order to deliver your project.

**How do I submit my claim for payment?**

For grants of under £10,000, the Council will make a payment of up to 50% of the total grant sum upfront in order to help you get your project up and running (depending on the scale and scope of your project). The balance will be paid upon the submission of your final report and claim which will need to include invoices/receipts and satisfactory evidence that you have spent the funding in the way you had planned.

For grants of £10,000 and above, the Council will make a payment of up to 25% of the total grant sum upfront in order to help you get your project up and running (depending on the scale and scope of your project). You can then draw the rest of the funding down by submitting quarterly reports and claims, with the final sum being paid upon competition of your final report and claim. Claims will need to include invoices/receipts and satisfactory evidence that you have spent the funding, including photographs where appropriate.

By exception the Council may agree to more regular claims, depending on the cash flow situation of the organisation.

All grant funded work must be completed and claims submitted by the deadline date specified in your offer letter. The claim form will be sent to you with your offer letter.

**When do I need to submit my report?**

Depending on the nature and length of your project, you will need to complete either an interim, or a final report within six months of claiming your grant summarising what your project has achieved. If you are successful, your offer letter will set out the information that you need to collect and provide to the Council

**Keeping in touch**

We would really like to hear about your projects as they develop and love sharing your good news with the community. If you have a story you would like us to share please contact the Talk Community Engagement team on talkcommunityengagement@herefordshire.gov.uk

We can promote your project on the Talk Community Directory: [Directory Search - Talk Community Directory](https://www.talkcommunitydirectory.org/directory-search/?searchTab=content-pages&searchContext=1087&sortOption=0&pageNumber=1&pageSize=10)

**Help us improve**

Please help us to help future applicants, by telling us if you have any queries which aren’t answered in this document.

