

Inclusive Communities Fund

Managed by the Heart of England Community Foundation - see <https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/icfund/> for details.

The Fund

- consists of £9 million Commonwealth Games legacy funding
- is aimed at local and grassroots projects that: promote physical and mental well-being; foster community cohesion; and ensure that the positive legacy of the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

The Fund is now open for applications from community groups, charities, not-for-profit organisations, schools, and colleges in the West Midlands (Birmingham; Solihull; Cannock Chase; Coventry; Dudley; Redditch; Shropshire; Tamworth; Telford and Wrekin; Sandwell; Walsall; Warwickshire and Wolverhampton)

Sports Minister Stuart Andrew speaking at the launch of the fund in November 2023 said 'This £9 million Government funding will be spent on innovative projects to boost physical and mental health and wellbeing, supporting future generations. Our sports strategy sets out our plans to get 3.5 million children and adults active by 2030, and the Inclusive Communities Fund will go a long way towards making this happen.'

Applications are now open for four types of grants, ranging from Small Grants (£500 to £15,000) to Large Grants (£75,001 to £300,000), with all grants fully spent by December 2024.

Aims of the Fund

Grants will be available for projects that contribute to the four core missions of bringing people together, improving health and well-being, helping the region to grow, and putting the region on the map. The fund encompasses three key themes: physical activity and sport, mental health and well-being, and arts, culture, and creativity. Applicants must show how their project relates to these themes.

Most of the money will be used for revenue grants but there are some capital grants, eg for community building improvements and renovations. All project work must be concluded by December 2024.

Applications will need to show:

- tangible and achievable outcomes, and impact.
- ongoing sustainability beyond the initial funding.

New organisations less than two years old will need to demonstrate capacity to manage a grant.

Applicants must make sure they are within the UK subsidy threshold of £315,000 as set out in the Subsidy Control Act 2022 which explains a subsidy in this context is a payment which: is given, directly or indirectly, from public resources by a public authority; confers an economic advantage on one or more enterprises over others; and could have an effect on competition or investment within the UK, or on trade or investment between the UK and another country or territory, or both. (In practice, it is unlikely that any of CQ's members receive any subsidy as defined by the Act.)

Small grants are £500 to £15000

Aimed at 'grassroots' organisations with already established links into communities. Grants could be awarded for 'business as usual' costs for organisations struggling to deliver community projects. Organisations applying for a small grant must have an income level equal to or less than £500,000 as shown in their most recent annual accounts.

The funding guidance gives as examples of potential projects:

- SEND sports activity and support to make activities more inclusive
- Mental health awareness sessions or core costs of a group that improves mental health
- Community arts projects including payment of community artists.

Grants can fund core staff costs, volunteer expenses as well as direct project costs. The online application form is at <https://www.tfaforms.com/5092254>

Medium grants are more than £15000 and up to £75000

There is no income limit for organisations applying for a Medium Grant. It is anticipated that the Grant Panel will set a higher standard for these grants, expecting to see:

- longer term projects (although, bear in mind that all work funded by Inclusive Communities has to be completed by December 2024)
- deeper impact and more evidence of sustainability.

Revenue and core costs can be included in these applications. The online application form is at <https://www.tfaforms.com/5092248>

Large grants are more than £75000 and up to £300000

There is a closing date of 4 Jan 2024 for large grants. The guidance says that the fund expects these to go mostly to consortium-led, longer term initiatives that may have a local authority-wide remit. These projects should aim to leverage in some match funding and there is a sense in which the funders are looking for added value to consortium bids. For example: to a consortium providing and

enabling physical activities for SEND children and young people, they might look for things to be provided like:

- Mental health support or mentoring
- Volunteer and staff training and skills development
- Building capacity amongst mainstream providers to become more inclusive, eg by 'matching' them with existing inclusive providers.

If single organisations apply for a large grant they will need to clearly demonstrate their capacity to manage it. There is no income limit for organisations applying for a Large Grant. The online application form is at <https://www.tfaforms.com/5092244>

Small Works Grants are £500 to £100,000

There is a closing date of 4 Jan 2024 for small works grants. They are for small capital works that do not require planning permission. Schools and local authorities cannot apply for these grants. There is no income limit for organisations applying for them. The guidance gives examples:

- Refurbishing a kitchen in a community centre to be able to support more individuals to access services by offering them a warm place and a hot meal.
- Resurfacing a multi-use games area to offer a new lease of life and enable more physical activity and sports to take place for the local community.
- Building a sensory room for people with additional needs to engage their senses in a calm, safe environment that builds their confidence and abilities.
- Installing adapted equipment and facility improvements that don't require planning permission (or planning permission is in place) e.g. hearing loops, ramps, inclusive fitness equipment, changing places access e.g ramps, inclusive gyms, non-binary changing places, bikes and wheelchairs.

You must have at least three remaining years on a lease for the property to which a small works grant applies. The online application form is available at <https://www.tfaforms.com/5091475>

Eligibility

Applications must come from non-profit bodies including: Registered charities; Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs); Charitable companies; Companies limited by guarantee; Constituted community organisations; Local Authorities (such as rural parish councils, but probably not BCC or SMBC); Schools and other educational establishments - where a grant would be used for extra-curricular activities and activities which engage the wider community.; Community Interest Companies (CICs); Sports Clubs that address disadvantage; Co-operatives – registered Community Benefit Societies and registered Industrial and Provident Societies; Social Enterprises.

Eligible costs include: Staff costs; Volunteer costs – such as out-of-pocket expenses, training, DBS checks; Participant costs; Publicity/marketing; Monitoring and evaluation activities; Accessibility costs; Professional fees (grants for Small Works only).

The following are ineligible: Individuals/sole traders; Political groups; Religious/faith groups unless a grant would benefit a wider community and is not intended to influence people's religious choices or promote a particular belief system; Companies Limited by Shares (except CICs); National

organisations, with some exceptions; Animal welfare organisations, except where a project directly benefits people; Groups with significant financial free reserves. And funding cannot be used for retrospective work; Funding statutory services or facilities; The purchase of buildings or land; Any works requiring planning permission; Contributions to endowment funds, or payment of deficit funding, or replacement of loans; Sponsored or fundraising events or groups raising funds to distribute to other causes; Direct replacement of statutory obligation and public funding; Overseas travel or expeditions; Contingency budgets.

Application Forms and Additional Documentation

Application forms are available online using the links above and via <https://www.heartofenglandcf.co.uk/icfund/> The small grant form requires contact, background and tick box information and answers to eight substantive questions and some cost information. The small works form requires the same generic information and answers to about 20 substantive questions.

The medium and large grant forms requires contact, background and tick box information and answers to twelve substantive questions and cost information.

Additional documentation that is needed to make an application is:

- Your written constitution; or articles of association; or a set of rules
- Accounts for the most recent complete financial year showing income or turnover, expenditure, end of year balance, reserves. New organisations without annual accounts must send a 12-month cashflow forecast instead.
- A list of the names and addresses of your governing body members indicating which ones have bank authorisation.
- A bank statement from the last three months.
- Copy of your Safeguarding Policies, Equal Opportunities Policy and GDPR Policy.
- A Project plan for medium grants, a Business plan for large grants and small works grants
- Quotations for small capital items over £300 (including online prices etc).
- Subsidy Control documentation (for Small Works Grants) – this shows how much, if any, other subsidy you are receiving from Government sources.
- A Memorandum of Understanding – for consortium and partnership projects.
- Evidence of other funding (for large, medium and small works grants)

Grant Award Decisions, Limits and Further Information

The Grant Panel may take up to 8 weeks to come to a decision on applications. Organisations can apply for more than one small, medium and small work grant (as long as they apply to different projects), but cannot apply for a second grant if they have already been awarded a large grant.

Advice and information is available from United By 2022 Legacy Charity via email at: info@unitedby2022.com, or Heart of England Community Foundation via email at: commonwealth@heartofenglandcf.co.uk. The application forms also have an advice line number for the Heart of England Community Foundation Grants team which is 02477800520. There is further information on the Foundation's web site.