



Guidance for Applying for Ward Discretionary Funds from The Highland Council

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1: Introduction

The Highland Council is responsible for the allocation of over £26 million of public money to the Third Sector (voluntary and community organisations) in the form of grants.

The principles of openness, integrity and accountability apply to all councils in their decisions on spending public money. These principles must also apply to funds and/or other resources transferred to external bodies.

2: Our Minimum Standards

We have established minimum standards of service which Third Sector Organisations should expect to receive when either applying to the Council for funding or seeking information on grant and discretionary funds which are currently available and managed by the Council.

Communication and Understanding: We will enter into partnerships with transparency, honesty and openness. Partners will strive towards continuous engagement and consultation and ensure that they are aware of the obligations, responsibilities and limitations of other organisations.

- **Timescales:** We will endeavour to provide you with a decision regarding your application within a **maximum** period of six weeks. If this is not possible (for example due to the application being incomplete or required to be considered by a Council committee), we will inform you within six weeks of the date that the application will be considered.
- **Feedback:** If your application for funding is unsuccessful, we will provide you with constructive feedback to why your application was not approved.
- **Equality:** We will ensure that within partnerships there will be equality of access to knowledge, opportunities and information.
- **Criteria:** We will publish clear criteria for each fund which the Council manages
- **Scoring of applications:** where formal scoring of applications against criteria exists for funds, this information will be available to Organisations
- **Information on funds managed by the Council** – we will publish an up to date list of available funds managed by the Council on the website at [Grants | The Highland Council](#) This will include names and contact details of the appropriate grant fund managers.
- In line with data protection standards, we will also publish a summary of grant and discretionary funding awarded to Third Sector Organisations from the Council including the purpose of the funding

- **Advice:** we will provide advice on completing application forms either directly or by directing you to partners (such as the CVS network) for support where required.

Performance: We will work together towards the achievement of positive outcomes and will attain excellence through on going monitoring and evaluation.

- Our monitoring requirements will be proportionate to the level of funding applied for and awarded.

3: What should you do first?

The standard application, core criteria and conditions of any grant and discretionary funding are applicable to all Third Sector organisations (voluntary and community) applying to the Council for this grant.

BEFORE beginning to complete the application form, please read the conditions of award and award criteria. Please ensure that you have checked if the fund you are applying to has additional supplementary questions and/or criteria which you will be required to read and complete.

4: Contact and Help

If you have any general queries regarding particular funds, such as eligibility, it is usually a good idea to contact the appropriate fund manager directly. In many cases, it is actually preferable to speak to fund managers (for example Ward Managers for Ward Discretionary Funds) in advance of submitting an application as this could save you a lot of time in the long term. Details of the contact person for the funding you are applying for can be found on the Council’s website at

[Ward managers | Ward Managers | The Highland Council](#)

Local support for applying for funding and support is also available through the eight Councils for Voluntary Service, contact details which are below.

Caithness Voluntary Group – https://cvg.org.uk/ Telephone 01955 603453	Community Support and Information Ross Shire https://www.csiross-shire.org/	Voluntary Action Badenoch & Strathspey https://www.vabs.org.uk/ Telephone 01479 810004
Voluntary Groups Sutherland, Alba, Main Street, Golspie, KW10 6TG Telephone – 01408 633 001 http://www.vgs.scot/feedback.asp	Skye & Lochalsh CVO- https://www.slcvo.org.uk/ Telephone 01478 612921	Voluntary Action Lochaber – https://valochaber.org/ Telephone 01397 706044
	Council for Voluntary Services Inverness – Telephone 01463 714303	Council for Voluntary Services Nairn – Telephone 01667 455234

5: How to Complete the Application Form

Please note the additional information which you should submit with your application:

- Completed applications and documentation should be sent to:

The Highland Council Grant and Discretionary Funding Applications,
Communities and Place,
Highland Council Headquarters,
Glenurquhart Road,
Inverness,
IV3 5NX

E-mail: policy6@highland.gov.uk

- A decision regarding applications received without a signed constitution and accounts cannot be made until this information has been submitted.
- Do not send original documents with your application - please only send photocopies. Paper documents that are submitted with your application will be destroyed.
- If you are requesting less than £100,000 in all applications to the Highland Council in the current financial year your accounts can be verified by an appropriate independent person, who does not need to be an accountant or auditor. 'Independent' means a person who is not on the committee or closely involved in the organisation, not related to any member of the committee or staff, and neither a provider or receiver of funds or services in relation to the organisation. This person should have some previous experience in understanding and managing accounts.
- If you are applying for any single item of equipment or service bought from a third party up to the value of £5,000, you must provide one quote. If you are applying for equipment costing £5,001 or over, you must provide 3 quotes. If this is not possible for any reason (e.g. specialist service only provided by one organisation), you should provide a covering letter explaining this.

Please Note: Any asset purchased with the grant must become wholly the property of the applicant.

- Organisations are encouraged to seek a range of prices for goods and services to ensure value for money.
- If you are applying for activities that could incur public liability (e.g. events), you should provide evidence of your public liability insurance, and permission for the event to take place e.g. event licence. If you do not yet have such insurance, please ensure that you include the cost of the insurance in your application.

- If you are applying for activities that involve building or other similar activities you should provide evidence of planning permission or confirm that planning permission is not required
- Where you are applying for funding that will be used to employ one or more people, you should include job description(s), even if these are still in draft form at this stage. These should detail proposed salaries.

Page 1:

- **Organisational Details.**

- 1) Please provide your official organisation's name.
- 2) Please provide the project title.
- 3) Please provide the location where the project will take place if different to organisational address.
- 4) Please provide the main contact's name and address for your organisation – this might be different from the contact address for this application. If your organisation has a website, please provide the address and email address. The main contact should have a good knowledge of the application. They may be contacted by the Council requesting further information.
- 5) To clarify which Council Ward the project or activity will cover, visit The Highland Council website Which you can find at: [Ward managers | Ward Managers | The Highland Council](#)
- 6) Please let us know if you have any additional needs to help you to fill in the application form, such as a large print version.

- **What type of organisation are you?**

Third Sector (voluntary and community) Organisations. If your Organisation is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a charity or Companies House as a company limited by guarantee please supply your registration number and /or company number.

- When will your activities or project take place? This should cover the complete lifespan of the project.

Page 2:

- **What activities or project do you want us to support?**
 - 1) Tell us what the project aims to achieve and how you are going to do it.
 - 2) Is the support that you are applying for to help with running costs or for a specific project or activity?
 - 3) If you are applying for support for an event, please ensure that you give the date and exact location. Please try to apply for funding as early as possible in advance of any event as we cannot fund events which have already taken place. Contact specific fund managers to clarify decision time scales for the fund to which you are applying – remember these decisions can take up to six weeks.
 - 4) Tell us who will benefit from the activities that your organisation is going to carry out?
 - 5) Tell us how many people the project will benefit and the different ways they might get involved.
- **Please state a summary of outcomes from your project.** *(If applying for £1001 and over)*
 - 1) How will this benefit the local community or service users?
 - 2) What do you hope to achieve from this project?
 - 3) What will this project achieve in the long term?

Page 3:

- **How much will your activities or project cost and how much do you require from Highland Council?**
 - 1) Please give as much information as possible about how you have reached the total cost within your application. It is important that we are able to see that funds given to organisations are achieving the best possible value for money.
 - 2) If you are applying for funds to pay a third party for either goods or services, please attach copies of one quotation with you application for items to the value of £5,000. If equipment costs are over £5,001 three quotations will be expected.

- 3) If you are applying for staff costs, you should show the costs of each post (or type of post if you are applying for more than one of a particular type of worker). Don't forget to include 'on-costs' – e.g. national insurance, pension provision and travel.
- 4) You may break down your other costs into whatever categories make sense for you – e.g. accommodation, equipment, stationery, training, etc.
- 5) Remember to include VAT where this applies.
- 6) Tell us what contribution your organisation is making to the overall package, if any. Please note that your organisation does not necessarily have to make any financial contribution.
- 7) Give details of the value of any contribution from other organisations for this project.
- 8) Has your organisation applied to other funding bodies for this project and have they made a decision yet?
- 9) Please check your figures to ensure that the rows and columns add up!
- 10) We cannot give a grant for any items already purchased or which have been ordered and cannot be cancelled

- **Your Bank Details and other information**

- 1) Name of Bank Provide details of the bank account that you would like any award of funding to be paid into. Please note that the name of the bank account must be the same as the name of the organisation applying for a grant.
- 2) The sort code should contain 6 digits.
- 3) The Account number must be 8 digits long.

Page 4:

Checklist and Declaration

- 1) To ensure that The Highland Council can consider your application, please tick boxes to show what you have enclosed. Please enclose the requested information which is required to assess your application. **Please Note:** *if supporting paperwork is missing, it will result in a decision regarding your application being delayed.*

- 2) You may be requested to provide a range of other information depending on the type of grant fund you are applying to.
- 3) Please only send photocopies of your documentation. Any paper copies of documents that are sent it with your application will be destroyed.

Declaration

- 1) Please provide two signatures.
- 2) If you are applying electronically, you must submit a handwritten signature. This can be submitted via a scan or photograph of the final page of the application form.

6. Standard Conditions of Award

The following conditions apply to all Highland Council grants and discretionary funding to Third Sector organisations (voluntary and community)

- 1 The Highland Council will only provide funding for organisations which have substantial access to children if they have adopted the Highland Child Protection Committee's Child Protection Policy. Grant supported organisations which hire out their facilities must also check that relevant groups have an appropriate policy in place. The Child Protection Policy For Community groups can be accessed at:

[Policies - Child protection | The Highland Council](#)
- 2 Monies must be expended and claimed according to the timescale detailed in the letter of award. Where a project exceeds the original timescales or remains substantially incomplete at the expected conclusion date, the Highland Council reserves the right to withdraw the offer. Applicants should request an extension of the period of award, in writing, and should indicate the reason for this. No guarantee can be given that any request for extension of this period will be granted.
- 3 Payment Arrangements: Depending on the type of award, payment may be made in a number of ways for example:
 - For awards under £3000, the Council will consider paying a full award at the beginning of a project. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Council pay the full grant up front for amounts over £3000;
 - A proportion of a revenue award (usually maximum of 50%) made as an initial payment and the remainder on project completion;
 - On completion of project;
 - Staged payments for capital projects on production of suitable evidence of expenditure e.g. receipted invoices, project accounts certified as a

true and accurate record of expenditure by two office bearers of the organisation, audited accounts, architect's certificates etc.

In most cases, the Council will make payments by Bank Automated Clearing System (BACS) unless alternative arrangements are made through agreement with the Council.

- 4 If costs incurred in any project are less than the amount approved by the Council, the remainder of the award must be returned to the Council.
- 5 If actual expenditure exceeds the amount of award, only the amount approved will be granted.
- 6 All awards must be used for the purpose for which they were allocated. If the project is materially different from that for which the award was approved, the award will not be paid or will be re-claimed unless changes have been agreed in advance and confirmed in writing. The award cannot be transferred to any other organisation without the written approval of the Council. If you give or sell items bought with the award to another owner, you will have to repay the award to the Council.
- 7 If the organisation that has received an award is disbanded, then goods, equipment or facilities purchased from the award will revert to the Council. If the goods, equipment or facilities have been lost, stolen or damaged and not replaced, all monies obtained from their insurance will revert to the Council.
- 8 Where it is intended that organisations dispose of equipment funded or supplied free of charge by the Highland Council then notification of intention to dispose should be made to the appropriate Council Service for consideration and approval.
- 9 Any equipment should be in the control of a named person at a given address in secure premises and must be adequately insured and regularly maintained by a qualified person. Any equipment should be supplied by a bona fide supplier and should comply with all statutory obligations under the relevant Health and Safety Regulations. Any assets purchased with a Highland Council grant must be wholly in the ownership of the applicant organisation
- 10 This funding has been awarded on the understanding that any planning permissions / building warrants etc will be obtained. Applicants will be required to ensure that they meet all other statutory requirements. Evidence of compliance may be required before payment is made.
- 11 Where a project involves improvement of premises or requires possession of land, the applicant will require to be the owner or tenant (on a lease for 5 years or more) of the premises or land before an award will be released.
- 12 If the project is one that involves and is dependent upon contribution from a number of bodies, payment of award will not be made until the Council is satisfied that such contributions are forthcoming.

- 13 The Council will require you to give due recognition of the Council's contribution by using The Highland Council logo on all relevant publicity material. Publicity requirements and the Council logo are available on the Council's website
[The Highland Council logo | The Highland Council logo | The Highland Council](#)
- 14 All financial records in connection with any project that receives grant and discretionary funding support from the Council must be available for inspection if required by an Officer from the Council or by the Council's Internal or External Auditors. Please do not dispose of any records for at least three years from payment of the final award instalment.
- 15 The Council will not accept liability for any damages or injuries associated with projects or equipment for which funding support has been given by the Council.
- 16 The Highland Council will not fund or support retrospective applications. The purpose of the application must not have started in any way prior to the approval of the award.
- 17 The Council has obligations to meet the requirements of UK Equal Opportunities legislation. Recent and impending changes to the legal framework extend our responsibility as a public body to promote and encourage equal opportunities in addition to tackling unlawful discrimination. Equality and fairness are central to the way we conduct business. The Council reserves the right to withdraw its funding from an organisation which is deemed to be in breach of the principles within the Council's policies on equality and fairness. These policies can be accessed.
[Equal opportunities | Equal opportunities | The Highland Council](#)

7. STANDARD GRANT CRITERIA

The following core criteria apply to all Highland Council grants and discretionary funding to third sector organisations (voluntary and community).

Some funding streams may have additional criteria which the applicant requires to consider.

General

- Applicant groups must have a constitution
- Be consistent with the purpose of the fund
- Applicants should have procedures in place to monitor and evaluate projects
- Applicants must demonstrate good value for money
- Applicants must have all planning and other permissions in place prior to the grant payment.

Please Note: Any application of £10,000 or over requires Area Committee approval and further info will be required e.g. business plan, Equal Opportunity Policy, Child Protection Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Complain Procedure.

Specific

What the Highland Council Third Sector Grant Schemes won't fund

- Applicant organisations must not be party political
- The Council welcomes applications from religious organisations that want to carry out work in the community, but the Council does not normally fund projects or activities:
 - that are designed primarily to promote religion itself; or
 - where people must take part in religious services in order to benefit.
- Costs incurred retrospectively
- Hospitality – The Council would not normally fund hospitality unless deemed to be a critical part of an Organisation's activity or project. Please check with specific grant fund managers.

8. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

Diagram A: What happens to your application?

