

Community Investment

**General Criteria, Guide to the
Application Process and Terms
and Conditions of Funding**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cumberland Council has established an investment scheme for voluntary and non-profit-making groups. Investments are available for groups who are involved in community projects and initiatives that benefit the residents of a community within the area.
- 1.2 Community Investments are coordinated by the Council's Community Development Team and applicants are advised to contact the team for advice and guidance in advance of making an application for funding.
- 1.3 In awarding funds we aim to ensure that the application process is easy to understand and made clear to all applicants, while at the same time ensuring sufficient information is gathered to promote value for money, fairness in decision making, public accountability and avoidance of fraud or misuse of funds, reflecting the highest standards of public sector financial management.

2. The Community Investment Fund - Criteria for Funding

- 2.1 Investments from this fund are awarded to groups who are involved in community-based projects and initiatives that will benefit the local area. The Community Investment Fund is intended to invest in communities to bring about a positive and lasting change for the benefit of the whole community.
- 2.2 Projects and/or initiatives will be assessed on their ability to contribute to the achievement of the locally identified Community Panel priorities. Find out more at cumberland.gov.uk/your-community/community-panels
- 2.3 The following criteria must be met to be eligible for funding under this Neighbourhood Investment scheme:
 - a. Investments will be given only to third sector organisations to support community initiatives that benefit residents in their local area.
 - b. Applications will only be considered from constituted groups with a committee or board with at least three unrelated members who do not reside in the same household. We do not accept applications from individuals.
 - c. Investments will be awarded for one-off project costs which benefit the community. For example, improvements to buildings or purchase of equipment etc.
 - d. Investment applications will be considered for non-recurring expenditure only. Operational running costs (Such as salaries, refreshments, electric, gas, water, phones, mobile phone monthly charges, consumables, annual maintenance/subscriptions contracts, project contingency costs, insurances, internet fees, management fees, cleaning, gardening and appliance servicing etc) will not be funded.
 - e. Pilot projects will be considered. Applicants must be able to demonstrate need/demand, outputs and outcomes, have an identified delivery period and have an exit strategy and/or identified future funding sources. Eligible pilot costs include equipment, marketing, salaries (where in addition to core staffing hours) and room hire (if the organisation

applying is using their own facilities, this is not applicable). Any salaries funded must reflect the living wage.

- f. Community Panels will not normally fund 100% of project costs. Applicants are expected to contribute a proportion of the costs from other sources.
- g. Organisations cannot apply more than once in a 12-month rolling period for any given project.
- h. Political and religious organisations are eligible for funding for community activities or purchases that support the wider community. Political or religious activity will not be funded.
- i. We cannot fund activity undertaken by Cumberland Council or Westmorland and Furness Council. Applications will also not be accepted from schools. School Parent, Teacher Associations (PTA's) can apply but only for projects which have a community benefit and open access.
- j. Organisations should promote equality of opportunity. Organisations who discriminate against any person or group with a protected characteristic will not be funded.
- k. One off community events will not be funded.
- l. Activities where any surpluses would be passed to another organisation will not be funded.
- m. Investments will not be awarded retrospectively.
- n. Applications will not be processed for organisations with an overdue Project Achievement Report (PAR).

3. The Application Process

- 3.1 Applications for funding should be made on our application form. Application forms can be downloaded from our website <https://www.cumberland.gov.uk/your-community/community-panels>
- 3.2 Completed application forms must be signed and returned with the following supporting documents:
 - A minimum of two Estimates/Quotes from two different independent suppliers.
 - A detailed breakdown of all costs associated with your application for funding.
 - A copy of a recent Bank Statement for all accounts held in the name of your group.
 - A copy of your most recent Annual Accounts or Audited Accounts.
 - Your Equal Opportunities Policy or Statement (where not explicit in the Constitution).
 - Your Constitution or other governing documents.
 - A copy of your last Annual Report or AGM minutes.
 - Your Child Protection Policy, where appropriate.
 - Your Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy, where appropriate.

- 3.3** You can fill in an electronic version of the application form using Microsoft Word and submit via email. Electronic submissions must include a scanned copy of the signature page with at least 2 signatures. Alternatively, each signatory can email a copy of the form confirming they are happy with the submission and that they wish for the email to be accepted in place of their signature.
- 3.4** Incomplete applications or applications that do not include all supporting documentation, as stated in section 3.2, cannot be considered for funding.
- 3.5** We may contact you to ask for more details about your project or possibly arrange to visit your organisation. We will be pleased to help you with any queries you may have in relation to the supporting information you are required to provide in advance of submitting your completed application.

4. How your Application is Dealt With

- 4.1** Upon receipt of an application for funding we will make an initial assessment to check that the application is eligible for funding against the criteria of the scheme and that all supporting documentation has been provided.
- 4.2** We aim to acknowledge receipt of all applications within 10 working days of receiving the application.
- 4.3** An evaluation report will be produced by officers within the team for each eligible application along with a recommendation for funding.
- 4.4** A Community Panel made up of councillors and co-opted members from the area will discuss the application at a formal meeting and make a final recommendation for funding. Only councillors can make the final decision.
- 4.5** Once your application has been considered and a decision has been made we will inform you by letter and if you have been successful, we will arrange for the funds to be released.

5. Unsuccessful or Ineligible Applications

- 5.1** Applicants whose applications are unsuccessful or ineligible will be notified by letter and receive feedback on the reasons for the failure of the investment application within two weeks of the decision.

6. Payment of Funding

- 6.1** Once authorised, the council's Finance department will arrange for funding to be paid directly into the group or organisation bank account via the Bank Automated Credit System (BACS).

7. Project Achievement Report (PAR)

- 7.1** As part of the conditions of funding you are required to complete and return a Project Achievement Report (PAR) within six months of receiving funding. Extensions can be considered for longer term projects.

- 7.2** As part of the PAR you will be required to provide supporting documentation e.g. receipts, invoices, bank statements etc to evidence the expenditure of the funding awarded. The PAR process is designed to assist you in evaluating the success of your project or initiative and provides an evidence base for the council's internal audit process.

8. Promotion of our funding support

- 8.1** We require that groups and organisations recognise Cumberland Council's funding support by highlighting this on all promotional materials in relation to the project or initiative e.g. acknowledgement in any press releases issued by the group, social media postings, posters, flyers, website etc.

9. Subsidy Control

- 9.1** The UK Subsidy Control Act regulates public funding given out by public authorities. It is designed to make sure that public money is used effectively without giving unfair advantage to one recipient over others in the same economic or commercial market.
- 9.2** Minimal financial assistance (MFA) allows public authorities to award low-value subsidies (up to £315,000 across 3 financial years) without the need to comply with the majority of the subsidy control requirements.
- 9.3** If the funding requested is considered to be a subsidy and does not meet MFA, please contact the team as the project will need to align with certain principles. Further information on subsidy control can be found on the government website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime>

10. Terms and conditions of funding for Cumberland Council

- 10.1** You are required to maintain a bank account in the name of the group. All withdrawals from the account should require a minimum of two signatures.
- 10.2** Investments awarded must be spent only on the purpose for which is stated within your application. If your circumstances change, and you wish to vary the way in which you spend your investment, you are required to contact us and request written permission to do so. Permission will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 10.3** You are required to provide access to all necessary documentation, as stated in section 3.3 of this document, to support your application for funding.
- 10.4** Financial support provided by Cumberland Council should be acknowledged on all printed publicity and in information given to the press and media.
- 10.5** Your organisation or group should promote equality of opportunity and eliminate all forms of discrimination against any person or group with a protected characteristic. Your commitment to this should be clearly identified in a written policy or statement that considers current legislation and good practice.

- 10.6** In the event of your organisation ceasing to operate or failing to undertake or complete the activity for which the investment was offered, the Council reserves the right to seek recovery.
- 10.7** You will be required to submit a Project Achievement Report six months after any investment award has been paid. Organisations or groups who do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Achievement Report may be required to return their funding and will not be considered for future funding.