



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

GUIDANCE

# Local Broadband Fund: guidance

Guidance and how to apply for the Local Broadband Fund.

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# Introduction

The purpose of the guidance is to advise the priorities that Welsh Government will support through the Local Broadband Fund to applicants in Wales in 2021 to 2022.

It also sets out the process by which applicants should submit applications in line with these priorities, for consideration by the Welsh Government, and how they will be assessed.

Funding which follows this guidance and associated assessment criteria will be made direct to applicants and will be available for 2 tranches in 2020 to 2021. Separate guidance and assessment criteria will be provided for funding in 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023. Applicants should note that Welsh Government is unable to give a commitment for grant support after 2022 to 2023.

Funding will be awarded as a subsidy under Welsh Government scheme number SC10183.

# Outcomes

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 requires public bodies to think more about the long-term, to work better with people, communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach.

The 2015 Act, places a duty on public bodies to seek to achieve the well-being goals and objectives in everything they do.

In your applications you must demonstrate that you have developed your proposal using the five ways of working and that your proposal maximises your contribution to the **well-being goals and objectives**.

Prosperity for All: the national strategy sets out the Welsh Government's vision for **Taking Wales Forward**, and sets out the well-being objectives under four

key themes. This forms the basis of the grant objectives.

In your applications you must demonstrate how your proposals will meet these grant objectives.

## Grant objectives

- The delivery of fast reliable broadband to those parts of Wales currently not served.
- Interventions to support the delivery of fast reliable broadband to those parts of Wales currently not served.
- Interventions to support Welsh Government economic priorities for jobs and growth, in particular for City Regions, Enterprise Zones, North Wales Economic Ambition Board, local growth zones and regeneration areas
- Interventions to improve quality of life particularly those living in disadvantaged and rural communities by delivering fast reliable broadband to those currently not served.

## Eligibility for funding

Eligible activities will be:

- the creation and enabling of broadband infrastructure including backhaul facilities
- upgrading existing broadband infrastructure
- deployment of digital infrastructure such as the laying down of passive infrastructure (e.g. civil engineering works such as ducts and other network elements such as dark fibre etc.), also in synergy with other infrastructures (energy, transport, water, sewerage networks etc.)
- the delivery of fast, reliable broadband to those part of Wales currently not served (ie. NGA “white”)

Subject to confirmation of budgets, the indicative total capital funding available

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for schemes across Wales for financial years 2020 to 2023 is expected to be approximately £10,000,000.

Subject to confirmation of budgets, the indicative total revenue funding available for schemes across Wales for financial years 2020 to 2023 is expected to be approximately £1,000,000.

Applicants are invited to submit up to two applications. Applicants should identify the priority order of these applications.

When designing schemes, local authorities must also consider their responsibilities under Section 6: The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The duty requires that public authorities must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity so far as consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, and in so doing, promote the resilience of ecosystems. Guidance on the Duty can be found here: [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016 Part 1 – Section 6 – The Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystems Duty: reporting guidance for public authorities](#).

Where the applicant is a local authority, we encourage local authorities to work together and submit regional applications. The lead local authority must be identified for each scheme. Funding would be allocated to the lead local authority.

Where the applicant is a local authority, we encourage local authorities to work with social enterprises and 3rd sector organisations. Local authorities will be responsible for carrying out and appraising the due diligence of all organisations that they are proposing to work with.

Applicants should consult with the communities and stakeholders affected by the scheme. They should report on the process followed and feedback obtained, or, if the scheme is in its earliest stages, how they will do so, within their application.

Schemes that include interventions that have a positive impact on social housing will attract additional scores in the appraisal process.

We will fund works and pre-works for schemes and the cost of scheme monitoring and evaluation can be included. Schemes where only pre works will take place will also be eligible for consideration for funding.

Applications for new schemes can be made for single projects or for a package of related projects. Applications for a package of projects should contain a costed list of the associated projects in priority order.

Funding will be allocated up to the amount awarded for actual eligible expenditure incurred on an accepted scheme. Funding will be capped at the level of the award and the applicant will be required to carry the risk of any overspend that may occur. Where increased costs arise due to exceptional circumstances, outside the applicant's control, Welsh Government may consider making additional funding available.

Applicants will be expected to deliver the schemes accepted in accordance with their applications. Reports on progress will be required at intervals throughout the financial year and further information will be included in the award letter.

Relevant Welsh Government officials or their nominated representatives, may request meetings or site visits to discuss scheme progress as considered appropriate. Failure to demonstrate appropriate progress with delivery may result in funding offers being withdrawn and funding claimed up to that point being recovered from an applicant.

Schemes that include match funding will attract additional scores in the appraisal process, with schemes that demonstrate greater levels of match funding scoring higher.

Applications must clearly identify the levels and sources of available match funding and confirm this will be in place to ensure the completion of the works within the 2020 to 2023 financial years. Match funding may be from internal or external sources and may include officer time.

For grants where multiple applications are invited, all schemes, within each grant, should be ranked in number order of priority.

## Grant terms and conditions

Other than in exceptional circumstances by prior agreement, schemes submitted for works funding in 2021 to 2022 should demonstrate that all land issues will be resolved and orders or required permissions are in place to allow works to progress.

The provision of capital support to schemes is conditional upon applicants' commitment to meet any future revenue and maintenance costs.

## Monitoring and evaluation

All schemes must be monitored and evaluated. Applicants are able to include the costs of monitoring for up to three years within their funding applications but these must be clearly identified.

Schemes must be monitored for three years post completion and reported to the Welsh Government annually. Further guidance will be provided on reporting processes in the award letter.

## Promotion

Applications may include costs associated with the promotion of schemes, including signage, materials and events, for up to three years after scheme completion. These must be clearly identified.

Any promotional material associated with schemes funded, whether partially or in full, through this fund should recognise the contribution of Welsh Government to the delivery of that scheme. All material should be published in line with the Welsh Language Standards. Any press announcements or publicity in relation to the fund, or any use of the Welsh Government name or brand should not take place without prior written approval from Welsh Government.

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# Application process documentation

Applicants should submit their applications using the template application forms. All schemes will be assessed through an appraisal process.

Applicants will be responsible for ensuring that delivery remains on schedule and reporting any change to the works programme and/or spend profile.

Applications for schemes must include a plan showing the scheme in as much detail as possible at application stage and a map showing the scheme context. An OS GB grid reference must also be included.

Applications for schemes delivering fast reliable broadband to premises must include a plan showing the scheme in as much details as possible at application stage and a map identifying the affected premises together with the UPRNs associated with these premises

Supporting documentation will be considered as follows:

- maps and plans in respect of capital applications (these maps and plans must clearly show the proposed measures)
- other supporting information, which you feel is essential to the bid, must be kept to a minimum and be anonymised, where applicable.

## Appraisal process

Applications will be considered by a panel of Welsh Government Digital Infrastructure officials and relevant stakeholders as appropriate.

Final decisions on funding will be made by the Deputy Minister for Climate Change.

The assessment criteria for the grants are available here: [Local Broadband Fund Application Assessment: criteria and weighting for Tranche 4](#).



# Submissions

Applications must be submitted by 9 December 2021.

An electronic copy of each application must be submitted to [NextGenerationBroadB1@gov.wales](mailto:NextGenerationBroadB1@gov.wales).

No additional or revised information will be accepted after the above date, unless requested by the Welsh Government.

## Local Broadband Fund application assessment: criteria and weighting for tranche 4

Criteria	Weighting (W)
Strategic case: does the scheme demonstrate a sound case for change? Does it fit with the grant objectives? Is the scheme NGA compliant?	10
Innovation: does the scheme demonstrate innovation in technology, deployment or financing?	5
Partners: does the scheme look to proactively collaborate with other organisations in their area? Does the scheme involve working with third sector organisations such as social enterprises; voluntary organisations; charities?	5
Collaboration: does the scheme demonstrate a regional approach?	5
Broadband and financial case: does the scheme outcomes offer value for money against the total scheme cost? What is the total cost per premise to deliver the scheme and does it constitute value for money based on industry	10

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Criteria	Weighting (W)
standards / existing schemes? What is the price per metre for backhaul and does it constitute value for money based on industry standards / existing schemes?	
Existing coverage: is the scheme in a local authority with lower percentage coverage based on existing "white" premise OMR data?	5
Management case: is the scheme deliverable and have any milestones been explained? Have the delivery risks been identified and mitigated appropriately?	10
Match funding: is match funding available? Scoring: 0% = 0, 1%-9% = 1; 10%-19% = 2; 20%-29% = 3; 30%-39% = 4; 40%+ = 5	10
Commercial case: how will the scheme be procured? Does it follow best practice and meet procurement / competition law?	10
Social housing: does the proposal have a positive impact on broadband availability for social housing	3
Monitoring and evaluation: does the proposal include plans for monitoring and evaluation? Do the plans provide information on measuring outputs and outcomes. Are the plans for monitoring and evaluation proportionate to the level of grant requested?	5

## Notes

### a) Scoring

With the exception of question 8, applications will be scored in accordance with the table in Appendix 1 below:

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## b) Calculation

The weighting is multiplied by the scoring for the assessment values, which are all added together to give a total score for each application. All applications will be “ranked” according to their total score and funding allocated on this basis.

# Appendix: marking scheme and evaluation guidance

Please note in the case of questions 1, 5, 7, 9 and 11, the applicant will be required to obtain a minimum score of 60 or above for all assessment questions.

Capability	Evidence provided	Score	Remark
Applicant is likely to be able to meet the needs of the authority.	Evidence is consistent, comprehensive, compelling, directly relevant to the project in all respects and highly credible (by being substantiated by independent sources where possible.)	100	Absolute confidence
	Evidence is sufficient (in qualitative terms), convincing, and credible.	80	Confidence
Small risk that applicant will not be able to meet the needs of the authority.	Evidence has minor gaps, or to a small extent is unconvincing, lacks credibility or irrelevant to the project.	60	Minor concerns
Moderate risk that the applicant will not be able to meet the needs of the authority	Evidence has moderate gaps, is unconvincing.	40	Moderate concerns

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Capability	Evidence provided	Score	Remark
Significant risk that the applicant will not be able to meet the needs of the authority.	Evidence has major gaps, is unconvincing in many respects, lacks credibility, or largely irrelevant to the project.	20	Major Concerns
Applicant will not be able to meet the needs of the authority.	No evidence or misleading evidence.	0	Not acceptable

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