



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Community Facilities Programme

### Guidance for Grant Applicants

(Version 3 - July 2017)

The Community Facilities Programme is a capital grant scheme operated by the Welsh Government. Grants are available at two levels; small grants of under £25,000 and larger grants of up to £250,000. Grants can be used to improve community facilities which are useful to, and well used by, people in the community.

The Programme is open to community and voluntary sector organisations, including social enterprises. The focus of the programme is on increasing opportunity, creating prosperity for all and developing resilient communities where people are engaged and empowered. All applicants are expected to work with partners which can come from the public, private or the third sectors.

Priority will be given to applications from former Communities First cluster areas but applications from other areas will also be welcome and we expect to fund the best of these.

Please read the following guidance carefully before completing the “small grant application form” or the “expression of interest form” if seeking a larger grant.

This guidance may be amended from time to time. An up to date version will always be available on our website at the link below. It is your responsibility to ensure that the guidance you are using is the most up to date version.

<https://gov.wales/community-facilities-programme>



## Who is eligible to apply to the Community Facilities Programme?

We are seeking applications which are community led. By this we mean that the lead applicant must usually be a community or voluntary sector organisation (see below for exception). For example a community group, a registered charity or a social enterprise. We are keen to encourage partnership working and therefore require applications which include public, private or third sector partners.

We will accept applications from local authorities in former Communities First clusters where there is no suitable community group to lead the application. In these circumstances the local authority will have to demonstrate that there has been meaningful community involvement in developing the application.

As a minimum requirement the main applicant/lead organisation must be able to show that they are an organisation which has:

- A constitution or set of rules, dated and signed as adopted by the Chair, or other senior office holder on behalf of the Board or Trustees;
- A bank account, in its own name, which requires at least two (unrelated) signatories;
- Evidence to show that any profit distribution is minimal i.e. restricted to the return of capital invested with minimal interest. This policy should be detailed in your organisation's constitution or rules;
- Less than £150,000 in unrestricted reserves. Applicants with more than £150,000 in unrestricted reserves must also provide information on the organisation's reserves policy. This should include whether any of these funds are being invested in the project and if not, the reason why not.

### Partners and key partners

A **partner** is an organisation you are working with to operate your facility and to deliver your project. For example: another community group using your facility on a regular basis and providing opportunities for local people to access training, advice and support or simply to socialise with others. Support from partners helps you to show that there is a need for your project and that the community facility you aim to improve is well used.

All applications will need to show how the community has been involved in the development of the project and how they will continue to be involved in the future operation of the facility. Partners can help you to provide this evidence. For example a local business, shop or post office could help with fund raising or with raising awareness of your plans including promoting community engagement events.

A **key partner** is an organisation you are working with on a more strategic level such as your local authority, local health board, county voluntary council or a Welsh Government programme like Families First, Flying Start or the Communities for Work Programme. Support from a key partner will help to

show how your project is of strategic importance in your area. For example if your community facility hosts a Flying Start setting or provides access to health outreach services for the surrounding area, such as hosting the National Exercise Referral Scheme sessions. Key partners may also help you to demonstrate that your project will not duplicate services available elsewhere in the community.

If your project is in a former Communities First cluster and/or delivering services funded under the Communities First Legacy Fund from April 2018, the support of your local authority will help you to evidence this.

### **Who is not eligible to apply?**

We will **not** accept applications from the following types of organisations, although they can be partners in any project where the application is led by a community or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise:

- Local authorities (other than in the exceptional circumstances mentioned above);
- Health boards;
- Town and community councils;
- Other public body; and
- Private sector organisations and businesses.

### **Additional eligibility criteria**

All applications for funding must be able to demonstrate that the lead organisation has the legal right to carry out the proposed works. This might be evidenced by proving that the organisation is the legal owner of the building to be refurbished or the land on which any extension or new building is to stand. If the land or building is mortgaged, applicants will also need to show that the lender consents to the proposed works.

If the lead organisation is not the owner of the land or building to be improved, then applications must include evidence of a long term lease (with at least 10 years to run) at an affordable rent. Applicants will also need the written consent of the landlord giving permission to carry out the proposed works.

### **What can be funded under the Community Facilities Programme?**

The Community Facilities Programme is a capital only grant scheme. Grants are available for the physical improvement of community facilities; this could include land and buildings.

**Capital** means physical works, and professional fees directly related to the physical works (including non recoverable VAT).

The purchase of equipment is sometimes eligible, for example where a project includes the fitting out of a new facility such as a kitchen or IT suite. The Community Facilities Programme will not cover the purchase of vehicles or the replacement of furniture or updating ICT equipment.

The scheme does not provide grants for **Revenue** costs including the costs associated with developing a business plan, feasibility study; a design only project; or the costs of staff and other operating costs.

The Community Facilities Programme will not consider retrospective applications i.e. where work has been started prior to funding being awarded.

All applications must be accompanied by the applicant's latest annual accounts where these are available. We recognise that some newly formed organisations may not yet have this information.

### **General Funding Criteria**

The Community Facilities Programme welcomes applications from communities throughout Wales. Applications from former Communities First clusters will be given priority but we also expect to fund the best of the applications from elsewhere. All applications will need to demonstrate that the facility to be improved is of strategic importance in the local community, and can evidence that it is:

- Needed and well used by the community and is or will be offering services not duplicated in the surrounding area;
- Providing services or hosting activities which offer local opportunities for people to improve their lives. This could include access to training, employability support, health and wellbeing activities or services focussed on early years;
- Reintroducing or preventing the loss of vital community services;
- Supported by and developed with the involvement of the local community;
- Supported by the local authority, local county voluntary council, local health board or similar key partner; and
- Sustainable over the medium to long-term (at least 3-5 years).

### **Community Involvement**

The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring that communities are involved in the development of the local projects and initiatives receiving funding from the Community Facilities Programme. The term **community involvement** is intended to include a wide range of levels and forms of engagement by local people, including:

- Information sharing, so as many people as possible know about the planned project;

- Empowerment of local people, developing their skills and confidence and by providing opportunities for them to get involved in local decision making; and
- Active participation by local people in the project, including involvement in decision making meetings and formal structures such as management committees.

Organisations will be expected to actively promote the principles of equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights. Organisations must not tolerate discriminatory practices – e.g. racism, or sexism – or allow Welsh Government resources to be used to do so.

Grants are available for capital works to provide or improve **community facilities** offering at least one of the following activities/services which help to increase opportunity and reduce inequality:

- Providing, safeguarding or re-introducing a valuable community service such as access to a credit union, post office, library or community shop;
- Hosting skills based or other training which leads to a recognised qualification, work placements or volunteering opportunities which improve the job prospects of individuals;
- Hosting local health services such as exercise or healthy living activities including activities aimed at older people;
- Helping to create community resilience by providing a focus for community events; opportunities for community engagement or volunteering opportunities;
- Helping to create strong social networks which allow people to work together locally enabling them to influence decisions at a local, regional and national level;
- Providing community IT access, broadband access and/or IT training to aid digital inclusion;
- Hosting a food/clothing/furniture bank, food co-operative, access to advice services or other similar activity;
- Activities and services which target homelessness such as Night Shelter or access to housing or other advice;
- Hosting activities delivered through a Welsh Government programme such as Families First or Flying Start;
- Adaptations to enable the facility to be used to provide childcare;
- Encouraging the co-location of local groups and service providers to improve the overall sustainability of the facility and to provide more integrated delivery of these services for the benefit of the community;
- Making the most of available funding by avoiding the duplication of services and working with other local partners in the community, public and private sectors to improve the life chances of local people.

## Volunteers and Volunteering

People of all ages can gain a significant benefit from the experience of volunteering whether it's from work experience or simply staying active and involved in community life. Organisations gain enormous benefit from volunteer time without which many services and activities would be impossible for them to provide.

Working with volunteers also helps to demonstrate how a project is embedded in community life. Applicants are encouraged to evidence how the organisation works with volunteers. Applicants should also consider whether they are working inclusively with volunteers who represent the diverse nature of the wider community. Applications should include how the organisation supports volunteers to ensure they have the best experiences and are appropriately safeguarded. Further information on how local County Voluntary Councils and the Wales Council for Voluntary Action can help you with developing policies on volunteering and safeguarding is provided below:

<http://www.wcva-safeguarding.org.uk/Safeguarding>

<https://www.volunteering-wales.net/landing>

### What is the minimum/maximum grant available from the Community Facilities Programme?

Grants are available at two levels:

- Small grants of up to £25,000, with a minimum of £5,000.
- Larger grants of up to £250,000, minimum of £25,001.

### Will my application require match funding?

You should aim to secure capital match funding for your project i.e. you should not ask for a grant to cover 100% of the physical works to be carried out. The amount of match funding does **not** need to be equal to the amount of grant requested, it can be more or less than the amount applied for.

We will also ask you about how you will fund your revenue costs, the costs of operating your facility. This information will be used to demonstrate the sustainability of the project. Revenue funds cannot be used to match fund the capital project.

The Community Facilities Programme is a discretionary grant fund. We cannot guarantee that every potentially fundable application will be funded. **We know that the Programme will be oversubscribed which means that we**

**may have to turn down some good applications as we do not have sufficient funds available to fund them all.**

The Welsh Government wants to ensure that all its grant schemes provide the best possible value for public money. As a result we would like to see applications with as much match funding as possible as this allows the public money to go further. Match funding can be in cash or in kind. Although we do not specify a minimum amount of match funding those projects which have secured other funds will score more highly against the funding criteria detailed below.

#### In kind funding

In kind funding is defined as project contributions given in goods and services rather than in money. These should be given a monetary value when included as match funding.

In kind match funding for a capital grant could include materials or skills donated by project partners or land or buildings provided at low or no cost through community asset transfers.

### **What is the application process?**

The Community Facilities Programme will operate on a rolling basis. This means there will be no bidding rounds. Applications can be submitted at any time.

Individual applications will progress as swiftly as possible, based on how quickly necessary information is received from applicants.

Organisations can submit more than one application but not more than three in any three year period. A maximum amount of £250,000 can be granted to a single organisation within a three year period.

### **Under £25,000 Applications**

The application form for the under £25,000 grant is designed to be relatively simple. We want to enable all types of organisations, whatever their capacity, to access this level of funding. More information is needed for larger grants.

The application form will test the eligibility of the lead organisation and to ensure that the proposals fit with the Community Facilities Programme criteria listed above. It will also allow us to consider whether meaningful community engagement has taken place in developing the project. Organisations submitting an application for a grant of under £25,000 should ensure it is accompanied by the organisation's latest annual accounts where available (or, where not, financial projections and a business plan).

Applicants will be required to identify at least one key delivery partner. During our assessment of the applications we will speak to your key partners and other Welsh Government departments with an interest in the proposals to discuss the project. The form allows applicants to tell us about the project and what it hopes



to achieve in 500 words or less. Please keep to the word limit as this will help us to process applications as quickly as possible.

Applications will be scored against the following **funding criteria**:

<b><u>Assessment Area</u></b>	<b><u>Maximum Score</u></b>
<b>Project Development</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Community Involvement</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Match Funding</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Collaboration with Partners</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Capacity to Deliver the Project</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Community Benefit</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Communities First Cluster</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Project Sustainability</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

No project scoring less than 60 against the above areas will be funded as we consider any project scoring below this level would be underdeveloped. However achieving the minimum score of sixty will not guarantee a grant will be awarded. The highest scoring applications will be funded first and the number of applications attracting funding will depend on the amount of funding available and the volume of good applications received.

Completed under £25,000 application forms must be accompanied by a copy of the organisation's latest annual accounts (where available). We encourage organisations to provide electronic copies of supporting documents where possible to [communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales](mailto:communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales). The application form signed by two relevant (unrelated) signatories must be submitted in hard copy. Applications can be submitted in Welsh or in English.

We aim to provide a response to all under £25,000 applications **within 60 working days**. This may not always be possible and will depend on the volume of applications being processed at any given time. The Community Facilities Programme is a discretionary grant and we know that we will have to make some difficult funding decisions. We do not expect to have sufficient funds to cover all fundable applications.

Applications for similar projects from the same organisation which have been rejected on **three occasions** will not be eligible to re-apply to the programme.

## **Applications for between £25,001 and £250,000**

The application process for the larger grants has two stages; an Expression of Interest stage and a Full Application stage.

### Expression of Interest (Eol)

The Eol stage is intended to prevent organisations whose applications have little chance of succeeding committing valuable resources towards developing a full application. The Eol is a short application form which will test the eligibility of the lead organisation; the proposal's fit with the scheme criteria and allows us to consider whether meaningful community engagement is underway. Eol's will again be scored against the assessment areas listed above.

Organisations with Eols scoring 60 and above against the assessment areas will be invited to submit a full application. Feed-back will be given to successful applicants to help them identify areas where more information will be needed at full application stage.

Feed-back aimed at helping unsuccessful applicants to improve their Eols before resubmitting will also be provided (on request) for those applications scoring below the minimum level.

Applicants will be required to identify at least one key partner at this stage. During our assessment of the Eol we will speak to your key partners and other Welsh Government departments with an interest in the proposals to discuss the project. The Eol will allow applicants to tell us about the project and what it hopes to achieve in 500 words or less.

Completed Eol's should be accompanied by a copy of the organisation's latest annual accounts (where available) and submitted electronically to the Community Facilities Programme mailbox at: [communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales](mailto:communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales) or by hard copy if preferred (see below for full postal address). Applications can be submitted in Welsh or in English.

We will aim to provide a decision on all Eol's **within 30 working days**. Again this may take longer where the volume of applications is high.

Similar projects from the same organisation rejected on **three occasions** will not be eligible to re-apply to the programme.

### Full Application

Organisations invited to submit a Full Application will be given a period of three months to submit a detailed application which must be accompanied by an up to date business plan. The business plan must contain cash-flow projections for at least three years. This will allow us to assess the sustainability of the application in the medium to long term.

## What is a Business Plan?

By a business plan we mean a document which:

- Sets out the case for funding;
- Establishes who is involved, in what capacity and how they have been engaged;
- Establishes the costs of the whole project (revenue and capital) and shows how these costs will be covered; and
- Includes up to date cash-flow projections for at least the next three financial years.

Full applications will be appraised individually against the published criteria as outlined above. Each project seeking over £100,000 will be visited by case officers before a recommendation for funding is made to the CFP grant panel which includes representatives from Welsh Government teams with an interest in the projects to be considered. Final funding decisions will be made by the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip. The timescale on decisions for full application stage will depend on how quickly individual projects provide information.

The Full Application form provides further information on requirements. We encourage applicants to provide as much of the information as possible electronically. However, we will require the application form to be signed by two (unrelated) signatories and submitted as a hard copy to the postal address below. Applications may be submitted in either Welsh or English.

Successful applicants may still need to provide additional evidence or information such as the results of match funding applications or requests for planning permission.

All unsuccessful applicants will be provided with comprehensive feed-back to suit the individual organisation. Organisations may resubmit unsuccessful applications within three months of the funding decision. These applicants will be expected to seek feedback and ensure this is used to improve the application before it is resubmitted.

Similar projects from the same organisation rejected on **three occasions** will not be eligible to re-apply to the programme

## **Outputs and Outcomes**

The Welsh Government will monitor the delivery of all successful applications under the Community Facilities Programme. We want to be able to not only record outputs, e.g. that a number of community facilities are now improved and fit for the future; but also outcomes, i.e. to determine the impact of the improvements on the people using the facility.

The application forms for both the under £25,000 grant and the under £250,000 grant ask organisations to tell us what happens in their facilities now. We also ask for information on what applicants expect to change following the improvements, for example, do they expect additional users, or will there be new activities. How many people will benefit?

An output relates to the activities and services delivered. In broad terms this includes things like the number of training places provided or the number of users of a credit union collection point.

Deciding which outputs to record in your application is not always easy. You should include information on your regular bookings for activities delivered under one or more of the broad areas listed on page 5.

An outcome should be a simple plain language statement of the impact of what you are doing it (i.e. why you are doing something). It should outline the changes you intend to happen in the community and the likely timescale for the change. It must be a statement for which progress can be measured. Outcomes should be things that can be achieved. You should aim for a minimum of three tangible outcomes for smaller grants and a minimum of five for larger applications.

You should aim to show the impact of the variety of activities offered, including longer term benefits. For example:

- How many people have now been given the opportunity to go back to work as a result of accredited training received this year and how is this benefitting them/the community?
- How many new user groups are using the facility than six months ago and why is this important/how is this benefitting the community?
- How many more people are now undertaking exercise sessions than in the previous year and how is this benefitting them/the community?

All successful applications will be monitored for a period of five years following completion of the project.

## **Photographs**

Photographs showing the internal and external views of facility are very useful during appraisal and should be submitted electronically if possible.

## **State aid - Are commercial activities eligible for support?**

All applications to the Community Facilities Programme will be assessed against the State aid criteria before a funding recommendation is made.

Public funding for economic activities carried out by organisations, including social enterprises and organisations with charitable status, is governed by the European Commission's State aid rules.

These rules allow small amounts of aid under the de minimis Regulation which is currently set as under €200,000 over a rolling three fiscal year period.

If we suspect that funding would constitute State aid and the de minimis Regulation does not apply then projects may also be funded using the General Block Exemption Regulation, which provides cover for grant aid specifically targeted at training or employment creation.

If your project needs State aid cover then we will contact you during the appraisal process to discuss.

## **Procurement**

Any works necessary for the delivery of a project must be properly procured and care must be taken to ensure that all procurement exercises are fair, open and are undertaken in a manner that is ethical, sustainable, accountable and compliant with procedural, legal and international obligations.

The Welsh Government will require evidence of the procurement process during the appraisal of a full application.

## **Can I get help in filling out my application?**

You may be able to seek support from your key partner(s). This may be counted as match funding in kind.

The County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) are able to provide funding advice and operate a grant finder service. While they cannot guarantee developmental support to every applicant they will provide as much help as time and resources allow.

You can find your local CVC by consulting the Wales Council for Voluntary Action website at:

<http://www.wcva.org.uk/members-partners/county-voluntary-councils>

WCVA and County voluntary organisations also provide help around safeguarding for small community and voluntary organisations. A link can be found here:

<http://www.wcva-safeguarding.org.uk/Safeguarding>

WCVA and County Voluntary Councils also provide help around volunteering policies. Help can be found here:

<https://www.volunteering-wales.net/landing>

Social enterprises may be able to access support through Social Business Wales at:

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/socialbusinesswales/>

or from the Wales Co-operative Centre at:

<https://wales.coop/helping-social-businesses-grow/>

### **Will my application be treated in confidence?**

We will need to discuss your application with others in the Welsh Government e.g. applications for projects working with Families First or Flying Start.

We will also contact the key partners you have identified in your application to discuss your project e.g. your local authority or local health board. Information about successful applications will also be used in publicity.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 all public bodies, including the Welsh Government, have a duty, in certain circumstances, to confirm on request whether they hold specific information and, to communicate this information.

### **When will I know the outcome of my application?**

We will acknowledge receipt of applications for the under £25,000 grant, Expressions of Interest and Full applications. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of full applications as soon as is possible. Each project submitting a full application seeking over £100,000 will be visited during the appraisal process. The timescale for this visit will depend on the number of applications being appraised at the time and the speed at which individual projects are able to provide information.

## Who can I contact?

For general queries please use the Community Facilities Programme mailbox at [communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales](mailto:communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales) otherwise contact us as below:

Mike O'Shea	0300 0628612
Rachel Thomas	0300 0258182
Debbie Pritchard-Jones	0300 628781
Lisa Clarridge	0300 0628307

## Postal Address

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