



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Community Facilities Programme

Guidance for Grant Applicants (2022-2026)

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 £300,000. 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 be working with partners which can come from the public, private or the third sectors.

Please read the following guidance notes and the Frequently Asked Questions pages carefully before and during completion of 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 be a community or voluntary sector organisation. 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.

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

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.

You may also be working with 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 partner such as this will help to show how your project is important in your area. This type of partner may also help you to demonstrate that your project will not duplicate services available elsewhere in the community.

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;
- 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. (Applications for the under £25k grant will only need a lease with 5 years to run.) Applicants will also need the written consent of the landlord giving permission to carry out the proposed works.

Legal Charges

We will seek to register a legal charge on any facility funded by the Programme which is owned by the applicant. This charge allows us to recoup funding if something goes wrong and the project closes leaving the community without access to the facility. You can request the charge is removed five years following the completion of the grant funded work.

What can be funded under the Community Facilities Programme?

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

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

The purchase of equipment is eligible 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, equipment or the updating of ICT.

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. In these cases applications should include financial projections.

General Funding Criteria

The Community Facilities Programme welcomes applications from communities throughout Wales. All applications will need to demonstrate that the facility to be improved 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;
- Supported by and developed with the involvement of the local community;
- 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. This can also include providing volunteering opportunities for local people.

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.

The Welsh Government is committed to eliminating inequality in all its forms. We want to ensure that all of our projects are open and accessible to all members of the community regardless of race, religion, sex, sexuality, gender identity or disability.

While the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act does not cover the activities of voluntary sector groups, we believe the principles outlined in the Act are very relevant to how we want to see communities working together.

The Act outlines five ways of working which are equally important in developing an application for the Community Facilities Programme, these are:

- **Involvement** – we want to see applications which involve the community in their development.
- **Long Term** – we want projects which will serve and support the needs of the community for the long term.
- **Integration** – we don't want to see duplication, we want applications that work to complement activities and services which are already available to the community.
- **Prevention** – local community facilities support and empower their communities. They provide support to prevent problems worsening, they provide access to advice and opportunities for social interaction. We want to hear about these in your applications.
- **Collaboration** – we believe it is important for community groups operating facilities to work collaboratively with other groups, users, local authorities, health boards and local businesses.

Combatting the Climate and Nature Emergencies

Communities can play a vital role in supporting decarbonisation and helping to protect community green spaces. Their actions can help to reduce our carbon footprint and encourage biodiversity. We want to encourage all applicants to consider whether their project can help to address these issues. For example:

- If seeking funding to improve heating, lighting or insulation are you considering an environmentally sustainable option?
- Are you considering the use of new technologies to improve the environmental sustainability of the facility? This can also lower running costs for the future.
- Will your facilities offer services which reduce the need for local people to travel outside the area?
- Does your facility have a green space such as a garden which could be used for community benefit or to encourage local wildlife?

Please tell us how your project is considering these issues.

You can find more information at:

[UK Green Building Council: Net Zero Carbon Buildings Framework](#)

<https://severnwyne.org.uk/projects/sustainable-organisations>

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;
- Providing local access to services which helps avoid the need for local people to travel outside the area;
- 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;
- Activities to combat loneliness and isolation or low level mental health issues such as coffee mornings, lunch clubs, or other drop in sessions;
- Providing community IT access, broadband access and/or IT training to aid digital inclusion;
- Physical adaptations to improve access to community buildings for disabled people, including access ramps, lifts, accessible toilet and changing places facilities;
- 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;
- Adaptations to enable the facility to be used to provide childcare;
- Activity which will help to address the Climate Emergency, such as energy efficiency or low carbon measures like environmentally friendly heating or lighting systems, insulation, new windows and doors, or new technology such as solar panels;
- Activity which will help address the Nature Emergency, such as community gardens supporting biodiversity, pollinators or the protection of green spaces;

- 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 and abilities 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 also 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:

<https://wcva.cymru/safeguarding/>

<https://wcva.cymru/training-info/governance-safeguarding/>

and here's the Volunteering in Wales link:

<https://volunteering-wales.net/vk/volunteers/index-covid.htm>

this link has resources for volunteers and volunteering orgs:

<https://wcva.cymru/volunteering/>

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 £300,000, 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

expect all applicants to do their best to secure as much match funding as possible.

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. 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.

Information on a range of funding sources which may be suitable for your project can be found at <https://funding.cymru/>

What is the application process?

- Applications can be submitted at any time. Applications can be submitted in Welsh or English.
- Applications and supporting information should be submitted electronically. If you have difficulties with this, please contact us.
- 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 £300,000 can be granted to a single organisation within a three year period.
- 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.

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.

The application form will test the eligibility of the lead organisation and 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).

Applicants will be required to identify at least three partners. During our assessment of the applications we will speak to your 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**:

Assessment Area	Maximum Score
Fit with CFP Criteria	10
Community Involvement	15
Match Funding	15
Collaboration with Partners	10
Capacity to Deliver the Project	10
Community Benefit	10
Tackling Inequality	10
Project Sustainability	10
Climate/Nature Emergency activities	10
Total	100

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). Organisations should provide electronic copies of supporting documents to communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales. The application form signed by two relevant (unrelated) signatories must be scanned and e-mailed.

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 between £25,001 and £300,000

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 allow 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 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 three partners at this stage. During our assessment of the Eol we will speak to your 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

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.

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 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.

Full applications will be assessed individually against the published criteria as outlined above. Each project seeking over £100,000 will be asked to provide additional information such as photographs 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 Minister for Social Justice. 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. Applicants to provide information electronically to communityfacilitiesproghelp@gov.wales.

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

All unsuccessful applicants will be provided with comprehensive feed-back to suit the individual organisation. Organisations resubmitting following an unsuccessful application will be expected to seek feedback and ensure this is used to improve the application before it is resubmitted.

Project Targets

The Welsh Government will monitor the delivery of all successful applications under the Community Facilities Programme. We want to be able 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 £300,000 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?

Using plain language to provide a statement of the impact of what you are doing (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. Targets should be things that can be achieved. You should aim for a minimum of three targets 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 assessment and should be submitted electronically.

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.

What this means is that:

- For under £25k projects, three quotes must be obtained for the work to be funded; and
- For larger projects a tender exercise must be carried out before grant will be released.

Can I get help in filling out my application?

The County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) are often able to provide funding advice. 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:

<https://thirdsectorsupport.wales>

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

<https://wcva.cymru/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 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. Project visits may be carried out during the application process if this is considered appropriate.

Who can I contact?

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

Rachel Thomas	0300 0258182
Mike O'Shea	0300 0628612
Lois Hughes *	0300 0625311
Lisa Clarridge	0300 0628307

- Denotes Welsh Speaker