**Community Grants Programme 2019 - 2022**

**Guidance Round 5**

This guidance has been produced to help you complete your ESF Community Grants Application and has been designed to ensure that all applicants are given equal and fair consideration. It is therefore important that you provide all the information requested and in the format and order specified.

Applicants should answer all the questions as accurately as possible and keep within any pre-set margins, ensuring answers are provided in the boxes only. You should complete the form in English and use Arial font size 11 for all your responses. If an answer is considered not relevant to your organisation you will need to state why, keeping within the word count. Failure to provide the information, or make a satisfactory response to a question may mean that your bid is eliminated from the process.

The first part of your bid (Stage 1) will not be scored, except for questions 36 and 40 in the finance section, see below for an explanation, but will be considered to have either ‘Passed or Failed’. If it is judged to be a pass it will then go before the panel (Stage 2) to be scored. The decision made by the Panel will be final.

**Stage 1.**

Please ensure that you fully complete Sections in Stage 1. The answers given will determine if your bid is passed through to Stage 2. A full appraisal called Due Diligence will be carried out on your application/organisation, which includes checking the following:

* Your insurance details are valid
* You have a bank account and sufficient cash flow to manage the grant
* Status and activities of company directors and trustees
* References from the named partners in your application
* Track record of delivering

Stage 1 is scored as a pass or fail.

**Section 1a: Details of Your Organisation**

Details need to be the same as any on your governing documents, whether a constitution, a set of rules or a document setting out your organisations aims. The name you provide must match that used for legal matters e.g. bank statements, annual accounts, insurance certificates etc.

UKPRN (Provider Reference Number)

Add your UKPRN reference, if you don’t have one, consider registration immediately as we are unable to contract with an organisation without a UKPRN.

The UK Register of Learning Providers is a 'one-stop' portal to be used by government departments, agencies, learners, and employers to share key information about learning providers. The UKPRN allows providers to update their information in one place and share this across agencies such as the Skills Funding.

<http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/datadictionary/glossary/ukrlp0809.htm>

Please add a copy of your organisations constitution, articles and memorandums, set of rules or document setting out the aims of your organisation as a separate annex to your application.

**Section 1b: Grounds for Mandatory Rejection**

Please ensure that you answer **Yes** or **No** to all the questions in this section. With the exception of Q36, It is unlikely that your bid will pass the short-listing stage should any of your responses be ‘Yes’. This section will be judged as Pass or Fail; ‘Fail’ will remove the application from moving into stage 2.

**Section 1c: Business or Main Activities & Financial Information**

We need to know about your organisation: How did you originate, what is your purpose? What you do and the people and communities you work with? How long have you been established and what projects or programmes do you currently deliver? **Do not describe your planned ESF project at this stage**.

This grant is designed to assist small not-for-profit organisations based in and run by people from the communities they support.

We ask you to provide financial information about your organisation.

Groups with a combined of £750k or more will **NOT** be considered.

You will be asked to provide evidence with your application to prove you have a bank account in the name of your organisation and have enough revenue/reserves to manage the grant fund that you have applied for.

Any organisations applying for grants with a bank balance of less than of the total grant amount requested will not pass Stage 1.

**Section 5: Processes and Safeguards**

It is important that your organisation has policies in place to ensure safe and satisfactory working standards. If you are unable to supply copies of the documents requested, it is unlikely that your project will be funded.

**Finally:**

Applications that are deemed not to have met the criteria set out above will be removed from the process at this stage and will consequently not have the remaining questions in Stage 2 of the application scored.

**Stage 2**

**Scoring**

Assuming your application has passed the First Stage, Sections in the Second Stage will be allocated a score.

Each “scorer” will mark individual questions out of a maximum score of 5.

The criteria for Scoring will be as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| **Mark** | **Description** |
| **0** | **Fail** - does not meet the requirements; no evidence provided. |
| **1** | **Poor -** or limited response to the requirement, limited supporting evidence provided |
| **2** | **Fair -** partially meets requirements but falls short in some respects, satisfactory evidence provided |
| **3** | **Good -** meets the requirements in most respects and good evidence provided. |
| **4** | **Very good -** fully meets the requirements in all areas, very good evidence provided. |
| **5** | **Excellent** - fully meets the requirements in all areas and exceeds some or all of the major requirements. Provides an excellent and detailed explanation and evidence. |

The scores awarded to the answers provided will be weighted as follows:

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| --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Sections** | **Total Possible Score** |
| Activity clearly described - Unique/Innovative or non-duplication of delivery  | 5 |
| LEP Priority target groups  | 5 |
| Engagement Partnerships clearly described  | 5 |
| Clear and rational engagement strategy  | 5 |
| Employment Partnerships clearly described  | 5 |
| Clear and rational progression strategy  | 5 |
| Checks for eligibility and Assessments in place  | 5 |
|  |
| Hard Outputs (Engagement, Employment, Training, Volunteering) | 2 |
| Soft Outcomes (Qualifications, Skills) | 2 |
| Understands RARPA | 2 |
| Participant involvement in planning their learning | 2 |
|  Budget and Value for Money  | 2 |
|  |
| Good evidence of previous experience in supporting this target group | 1 |
| Established for more than one year in the delivery location | 1 |
| Demonstrates a track record of similar activity | 1 |
| Examples given link to real progression | 1 |
| Examples of differences and impact made to customers  | 1 |

Responses to questions in Stage 2 will be awarded an overall mark out of a maximum of 75 per scorer.

Scores awarded in Stage 1 will be added to the mark achieved in Stage 2 (increasing the maximum marks available to 81 marks).

Extra scoring is available for Round 4 Grant Recipients based on performance and quality of paperwork

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| **SECTION 2** |

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| **Name Your Project** |

You are advised to keep any proposed name short.

**Delivery Plan**

We need to know **who** you are working with, **when** and **where** you plan to deliver.

You will need to consider your responses carefully as answers given will form the basis of your contractual targets – if your Application is successful.

**Your Proposed Project.** (max 750 words)

Only describe the project you are applying for. **Remember you have already told us what your business activities are.**

This is your opportunity to explain your programme, what is specific about it.

* describe very clearly what activities do you intend to deliver (this is the essence of your proposal - dates, times, venues, activities)
* what makes your project innovative, creative or different? How will this differ from that currently on offer in the area?
* what does the participants learning journey look like?
* what are the needs of your community/location and participants and how does your project meet these needs and why is this work needed?
* how will your programme move individuals into work, volunteering or further education?

**Describe the partnerships you have in place that will support your participants to engage, be retained and supported during the programme**

Tell us how about your partnership working, include:

* a description of the steps you will take to generate referrals from the referral partners that you identified
* existing relationships with Job Centre Plus, National Careers Service, education providers and employers
* existing relationships within your community
* relationships you intend to develop
* how you intend to maintain these relationships
* your plans to support, retain and progress participants (including any incentives e.g. childcare/transport)

**The Participants Learning Journey and Soft outcomes**

In this section, describe the journey that participants will experience. What soft outcomes (transferable skills) will participants gain from being on your programme. Soft skills development includes increased self confidence and self motivation, communication skills, time management, assertiveness, working with others are all important steps in a person’s progression towards accessing learning and work. You will need to explain how you will measure distance travelled in line with RARPA (see Specification).

Explain how you will involve participants in their own learning journey. Demonstrate how participants will input into their own learning journey and how you will evidence this.

Describe the support will you build into your programme to ensure that participants develop transferable skills.

This could be in the form of:

* Volunteering and work experience opportunities
* Non accredited first steps learning
* Tasters to encourage the take up of learning
* Basic help with skills for life
* Job search support
* Mentoring

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| **SECTION 3** |

**Organisation Experience** (max words 500)

This is your opportunity to tell us about your track record and to share the experiences and the differences that you have made through your work in the community.

* List any previous programmes that you have been involved in which has helped participants to progress into positive outcomes (learning and/or employment).
* List tangible successes of previous programmes e.g. numbers progressed into learning or work through your programme

**Staff Team Experience** (max words 500)

In this section please tell us about staff that **will be involved in this project only, those that are detailed on the organisation chart supplied in Section 1).**

Who will be responsible for what duties in this programme and what experience do they have.

* Demonstrate that you have the capacity to cover the demands of your proposed programme.
* Demonstrate that you will either have sufficient capacity to delivery or if you need to recruit additional staff and/or volunteers.
* Include any details of how you will manage staff sickness, holidays etc without disrupting the programme delivery.

**Section 4. How much funding are you requesting?**

This question is not scored, but your answer will be taken into consideration by the Panel and may influence the final decision.

You will need to complete the table giving details of all the project expenditure. Give a description and breakdown for each item and the total cost. Make sure that all items of expenditure are eligible and avoid terms such as “miscellaneous” or “other”.

If you are planning on buying items of equipment, the limit is £1000.

Your budget can include a maximum of 25% indirect costs and 75% direct costs.

The **ESF eligible costs** which can be included under the three expenditure headings are as follows:

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| **Staff Costs – Direct Costs** |
| Project Co-ordinatorProject ManagerOutreach staffAdministrative staffTrainer/Tutor/Counsellor/Mentor | Staff RecruitmentStaff TrainingStaff TravelWork experience/volunteer co-ordinator |
| Staff costs can include employer’s national insurance and superannuation costs. Staff costs may include those costs covered in a person’s contract of employment that are taxable incentives linked to pay and pension contributions |
| Participant Costs – Direct Costs  |
| ChildcareSubsistenceExam & certificate fees | Training allowancesTravel costsParticipant equipment and clothingVouchers for rewards |
| Other Costs – Direct/Indirect costs  |
| Advertising and promotionConsultancy (not for completing the application)Copier RentalEquipment (small items up to £1000)Depreciation of owned equipmentInsuranceOperating equipment leases | PostageProfessional fees and costsRent (proportionate to the project)Room hireService Charges (proportionate to the project)Stationary and office suppliesTelephones/InternetUtilities (proportionate to the project) |

### Ineligible Costs

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| * Any expenditure before the agreed project start date or after the agreed end date (as stated in your grant agreement)
* Loan and current account interest or any financial charge
* Consultancy fees for the completion of the application form
* Staff or consultancy time spent completing the application form
* Purchase of equipment over £1000 limit
* Purchase of buildings or land
* Cost of finance leases
* Expenditure not related to the project (up to 25% can be claimed as indirect costs)
* Expenditure not supported by appropriate receipts/evidence (You MUST provide evidence of all expenditure via receipts, invoices, bank statements, time sheets and wage slips etc.)
* Any statutory training that employers must provide under GDPR, equal opportunities or health and safety legislation
* Cash rewards to participants
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Please note that there is a distinction between direct and indirect project costs.

### Direct Costs

These are costs that can be directly related to the project activity e.g. salaries of project staff, participant childcare costs and other costs such as stationery and postage.

### Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are shared organisational costs and so cannot be connected directly to project activity and are therefore difficult to attribute to the project e.g. telephone costs, gas, electricity and water.

Indirect costs can be claimed on a flat rate basis provided:

* They can be proven to be fair and equitable (a greater proportion of the costs should not be charged to the project as opposed to your organisation).
* The estimates used to calculate the flat rate percentage are based on actual costs and backed up by a full audit trail
* Indirect costs account for no more than 20% of the direct cost of a project. 20% being the absolute maximum.

**Notes for Application Completion and Submission.**

1. Completed applications must be submitted electronically, by the due date and time set of in the specification. Late Applications received will not be accepted.
2. No additional information should be sent in with the document over and above what has been requested, and any additional documents received will be destroyed upon receipt if submitted.
3. The suggestions in this document are for guidance only and are not exhaustive. You are encouraged to include any examples which you feel fit and that are appropriate to the question asked which might strengthen your Application.
4. Do not exceed the word (or line limit if stated), all documents will be checked before going to the panel and any words or lines above the limit will be blanked.
5. Do not alter any of the wordings in the body of the document, any bidders who are found to have amended any wording either in the document or the questions will be disqualified from the process.
6. Please ensure your answers refer to the precise question. The panel will disregard a response if it has been placed in the wrong question.
7. Applications (or contracts awarded) will be withdrawn at any stage if it is discovered that there has been a deliberate misrepresentation made in any of the questions asked, that is later proved to be incorrect or incomplete.
8. The issuing of this invitation to Application, does not commit the Skills Funding Agency nor Futures to award a contract to any person or organisation or to continue with the process.
9. Applications **MUST** be returned in Word format only (**not PDF**)
10. Attachments to the main application, included in Annex’s can be sent as a PDF (e.g your policies, memorandum and articles of association, staff CV’s). Please List your attachments in Annex order and name each attachment file clearly.

**Application Feedback**

Successful providers will be notified by email. All other providers will receive their result following the Application review outcome by email. Feedback from the panel will only be provided via email, if requested via email to comm.grant.apply@the-futures-group.com

The timetable regarding the process can be found in the schedule.

This Guidance document may change subject to any instructions given by the Education & Skills Funding Agency and/or European Union.