

Dumfries & Galloway Council – Community Led Economic Regeneration Fund

1. Introduction

The Council's Economy & Resources Committee has agreed to allocate £250,000 from its Economic Development Capital Programme each year until 2023/24 to help community groups and organisations to develop project ideas that have the potential to regenerate sites and premises within their local area.

Commencing in 2021/22 (1st Round) the Community Led Economic Regeneration Fund will be available for applicants seeking capital funding to help them build their project ideas. The CLERF will be run in 2022/23 and 2023/24. More than one round may operate in any one year until the full £250,000 for that year is allocated.

The aim of this grant fund is to provide grant funding to support communities, charities and social enterprises to develop their ideas into successful capital and place-based regeneration projects. Funding is available for groups to develop their projects across several stages: from feasibility, then design, then getting capital funding confirmed and a scheme of works ready to proceed to tender. Grant funding can enable groups to explore the feasibility of their idea, to commission professional technical assistance that will enable a project to be developed to secure statutory consents, apply for funding to deliver the project, and to be ready to tender once delivery funding is in place.

In order to make an application, a completed Expression of Interest form will first need to be submitted providing details of the project and the costs applied for. You can find more information on this below.

2. Criteria and Outcomes

- The three streams of this fund are aimed at organisations who are looking to develop their idea into a viable capital project and onwards to the point of being ready to commence a scheme of works.
- Applications will be assessed based on a set of criteria to ensure that the applicant project will meet local economic priorities and be aligned with the national strategy on regeneration. It is expected that applications to the fund reflect projects that will achieve outcomes in line with the Scottish Government's Regeneration Outcomes as detailed in 'Achieving a sustainable future: regeneration strategy'. It is not a requirement to meet all outcomes, however, applications should detail where they do meet the outcomes strongly.
- Applications are particularly welcome from projects that will focus on the following:
 - projects that primarily focus on areas that suffer from high levels of deprivation and disadvantage
 - projects that demonstrate clear community involvement
 - projects that will deliver large scale transformational change with strong regeneration outcomes
 - projects that can encourage additional investment and address market failure
 - Projects that will contribute towards a post pandemic recovery
 - Projects that can evidence how their aims align with net zero targets
- For further details on the funding priorities and outcomes that projects should be aiming to achieve, please click [here](#).
- Overall value for money will be considered in addition to the grant intervention level requested and the financial need for grant support.

The fund consists of three streams of grant funding dependent upon the development stage of the project. These are:

- **Project Feasibility Grant** – This aims to help fund costs in exploring the feasibility of a project and undertake initial project development equivalent to Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Plan of Work Stages 1-2. Eligible expenditure can include technical professional fees, for example architect, engineer, quantity surveyor, specialist building surveys, reports and ground investigations and enquiries in relation to statutory consents and permissions. The aim of the Feasibility Stage will be to undertake an initial scoping and technical appraisal of a project idea. For projects that will progress through funding routes that require a business case equivalent level of development, this stage is equivalent to the Strategic Outline Case of HM Treasury’s Green Book process;
- **Design Development Grant** – This aims to help fund the development of the design concept that was the result of feasibility/viability work: the equivalent of RIBA Stages 3, to seek statutory consents and to develop a project cost plan and project budget that will enable capital funding to be secured. Eligible expenditure includes technical professional fees (as above), more detailed technical surveys, reports and investigations, and statutory consents and permissions. The aim of the Design Development Stage will be to undertake sufficient project development that should enable project planning to be undertaken to a more detailed level to enable funding proposals to be developed and submitted.
- **Construction Readiness Grant** – This grant aims to develop the detailed design and contribute towards the costs of the design information required to manufacture and construct the project: the equivalent of RIBA Stage 4. Eligible expenditure includes professional fees (as above) relating to more detailed technical surveys, reports and investigations in order to bring the project to a stage of tendering the works. This will allow projects to finalise the technical design and associated pre-tender costs prior to appointing a contractor and progressing towards a site start.

3. Eligible Grant Expenditure

The grant fund is capital in nature and consequently eligible costs for funding are restricted to technical professional fees (for example Architect, Quantity Surveyor, Engineer, Planning adviser), associated specialist technical surveys, reports and fees associated with applications for statutory consent that need to be undertaken to develop your project idea.

Costs associated with Business Planning, community consultations, community surveys, events, staff costs, project management costs, and site acquisition costs are not eligible for funding through this Grant Scheme.

The fund is not intended be a primary source of technical development funding for the following types of project:

- Housing projects, except for small community led housing projects;
- Major infrastructure projects relating to transport.
- Projects relating **solely** to hotel, retail or commercial developments – these are unlikely to be supported if there are no clear regeneration outcomes.
- Projects that **focus solely** on public realm improvements, parks, street furniture, new roads / paths or upgrades - these are unlikely to be funded. However, these may be eligible if they

are minor elements within major capital projects which will produce transformational economic and social outcomes.

- Flood protection / work / upgrades – these are **not eligible**.

Only one grant application per organisation will be considered in each round of funding.

In special circumstances, grants will be considered to fund the technical professional costs within projects that aim to prepare a Masterplan or similar for a brownfield site/vacant or derelict land may be eligible, subject to Member discretion.

Applications should be based on an actual quote rather than an estimate. If any single item of work for which you are seeking funds is over £10,000, you must obtain at least three competitive quotes. Applicants should be at least, formally constituted and have a governing body, such as a committee or board which includes at least three unrelated people and a written governing document. Private and public sector organisations are not eligible to apply for funding under this scheme.

4. Application Assessment

The deadline for Expressions of Interest applications is **12noon on Monday 13th December 2021.**

After this all Expressions of Interest will be checked, verified, and assessed for eligibility and suitability. Applicants making successful Expressions of Interest will be notified in December and invited to submit a more detailed application in January. A more detailed application will then allow us to assess how well your proposed project can potentially achieve the fund outcomes, how well planned and deliverable it is and how you plan to sustain the project in the longer term. The urgency and any associated risks of the project will also be taken into account.

The overall value for money your project offers against all of these factors will be considered as well as the level of grant intervention requested and the organisations financial need for grant support. DGC aims to decide in mid-March 2022 which Projects will receive grant funding and Offers of Grant will be issued by the end of April 2022.

Dumfries & Galloway Council will enter into a funding agreement with successful applicants.

5. Grant request & Funding profile

It is anticipated that grant requests will focus on projects that have the ability to progress with technical development work shortly after successful grants have been awarded. All expenditure must be completed within 12 months of the grant award, or the grant may be withdrawn.

Grant cannot be claimed for costs incurred prior to grant award.

It is preferred that the grant requests to this fund will include some level of match funding. However, applicants may request the full amount of costs where financial need is evident and other sources of funding have been considered. Evidence of financial need must be provided alongside the application and should be in the form of the most up to date financial statements or equivalent.

Please note that in the event of an application being successful, the panel may recommend a level of grant other than that requested in order to ensure all eligibility criteria are met or to fully utilise the overall fund. This would be subject to discussion with individual applicants.

6. Expressions of Interest

If you think your project is eligible and fits with our funding priorities, or you would like further advice, please complete the online Expression of Interest (EOI) and an officer will be in touch. You can download an EOI [here](#). Please send your completed Expression of Interest to:

CLERF@dumgal.gov.uk no later than 12noon on Monday 13th December 2021.

7. Funding for Capital Project Delivery

CLERF is intended to fund the costs of project development and not the costs associated with project delivery. However, through this fund we wish to develop a pipeline of community led economic and place-based projects that will attract investment and funding from a wide range of sources. By providing this funding we wish to maximise the chances of organisations of obtaining the funds they need to deliver successful projects.

A number of local and national investment programmes are operated by Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Scottish Government to support the delivery of economic place-based regeneration projects, subject to eligibility. In addition to this, the Scottish Towns Partnership publishes a funding finder resource on its website: [Funding Support - Scotland's Towns Partnership \(scotlandstowns.org\)](https://scotlandstowns.org)