1. **Introduction**

The Dumfries & Galloway Regional Events Growth Fund is being introduced in financial year 2024/2025 to help develop festivals and events that can become regionally significant with grant-funding support from our Council and other agencies.

It recognises the important role community festivals and events can play in support of tourism, community life, wellbeing and regeneration in Dumfries & Galloway.

Our Council welcomes applications from new applicant organisations and provides an opportunity for the grant-supported festivals of the Community Events Fund, that operated from 2021/22 to 2023/24, to apply for funding if their projects meet the updated criteria of this Fund. Applicant organisations will need to demonstrate a trajectory of growth in their visitor numbers over the past two or more years. The Fund will also seek to support new and one-off events that provide one means of support for communities to come together to enjoy sport for health and wellbeing, arts and culture and locally important heritage. Festivals and events that can demonstrate thoughtful means of responding to the cost of living crisis in their ticket prices or programmes are particularly encouraged to apply.

The Scoring Framework will be weighted to score highly projects that have the potential, planning and programming to attract visitors from across Dumfries and Galloway; in this respect it is different to its predecessor, the Community Events Fund, that was established by the Council to encourage local, community events to take place that could attract local, not specifically region-wide audiences.

The Regional Events Growth Fund has a total budget of £46,500 for 2024/25. The maximum grant that can be applied for is £4,000 and the minimum grant is £2000.

1. **The Aim of the Fund**

The aim of the Fund is to support and stimulate regional growth events that take place between April 1 2024 and March 31 2025. This Fund will:

* encourage festivals and events to take place that can attract audiences from across Dumfries and Galloway, due to good quality planning, programming and marketing
* be a potential source of funding for festivals and events that were planned and took place with grant-support from the former Community Events Fund in financial years 2021/2022 to 2023/24 inclusive;
* be a potential source of funding for new or recently established festivals and events that can demonstrate a trajectory of growth in their event
* encourage sports and outdoor events to be planned and to take place to improve health and wellbeing
* develop the sustainability of our events sector by providing a source of funding to growth events across the region;
* develop the quality of our festivals and events, to add to the quality of life in Dumfries and Galloway;
* provide festivals and events for our visitors to enjoy, that can be marketed with other local visitor attractions; and
* provide opportunities for low cost entertainment and participation within local communities.
1. **The Eligibility Criteria**

Eligible projects for the Regional Events Growth Fund 2024/2025 must meet all of the following criteria;

* The festival or event must have a budget of £10,000 or more
* The festival or event must attract, or be forecasted to attract, 600 unique visitors or more from across Dumfries and Galloway
* The festival or event must be marketed across Dumfries and Galloway, including paid for channels i.e. more than free social media channels
* The festival or event must demonstrate community support
* The festival or event must demonstrate business support
* The festival or event must have an identifiable project champion
1. **Scope of the Fund**

The Regional Events Growth Fund is open to the following organisations:

The Self-employed (through limited company or as a sole trader); businesses; charitable organisations; Community Interest Companies and Social Enterprises; partnerships; constituted community groups. Applicant organisations must have a bank account in the name of the organisation which will incur the direct expenditure.

Eligible project costs can include:

* Temporary staff costs
* Equipment hire
* Marketing costs
* Performers fees and travel costs
* Venue hire
* Licencing and road closure costs
* Consultancy support around public health safety, risk management and health and safety
* Website costs and customer relationship management costs if they are related to the event’s promotion, public health advice and updates, sustainable travel options and regional tourism and shop local campaigns

**The Regional Events Growth Fund will not support the purchase of capital equipment.**

A festival or event can be defined as a special programme of themed activities that takes place separately to normal ongoing sports, cultural, community or heritage programmes. They may be held annually but are confined to a limited amount of time. The Fund will only consider festivals and events that are being planned to take place between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Organisations that are in receipt of Signature Events funding from the Council are eligible to apply to the Regional Events Growth Fund, but other sources of Council match funding are not eligible. Organisations cannot apply to this Fund and for Council Area Committee funding for the same project.

1. **How Much Funding is Available?**

Applicant organisations can apply for up to £4,000 or up to a maximum of 40% of the total project costs, whichever is lower. The minimum grant that can be applied for is £2000.

The Regional Events Growth Fund will open for applications on Monday 16 October 2023 and close for applications on Friday 24 November 2023 at 5pm.

1. **What are the Conditions?**

There are a number of conditions that need to be considered before submitting an application:

* Your event cannot have started before your grant is awarded.
* Online events or events planned to have a significant online programme are ineligible to apply.
* Your application cannot include ‘in-kind’ contributions as match-funding
* Late applications will not be accepted for the Fund.
* The decisions reached by Dumfries & Galloway Council regarding grant awards will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
* Any form of lobbying in support of applications made to Councillors or Dumfries & Galloway Council staff is strictly prohibited.
* A copy of your organisation’s Constitution and most recent annual certified accounts are required with your application to ensure your project meets the governance requirements of the Council.
* Businesses must supply their company registration number and sole traders their unique tax reference number to be eligible to apply.
* If your organisation applies to the Regional Events Growth Fund you cannot apply for other sources of Council funding for the same event.
* Successful applicants will be required to attend a short online training course on how to reduce the carbon footprint of events.
* Your project must include very good quality community engagement and consultation in the planning and delivery of your project. The Council reserves the right to provide advice and direction in this aspect of the event’s planning if it falls below community requirements
* The Fund will not support regular or recurring programming in year-round venues. This includes productions in theatres and arts centres; live music or comedy in venues, pubs and clubs, unless part of a wider festival
* Events which have a principal focus as fundraising events are not eligible to apply.
* Events which are not open to all members of the community to attend are not eligible to apply.
* Applications made by religious organisations for religious events are ineligible
* Funding requests to support regularly scheduled sporting fixtures are not eligible to apply
* Successful applicants will be requested to share events information to support regional marketing campaigns to promote tourism, health and wellbeing in 2024/25
1. **Support for Your Events Planning**

If your application to the Regional Events Growth Fund is successful, our Council will provide a contact from whom to obtain ongoing support in the planning of your event.

We have updated our Council’s events toolkit as one source of advice and information to help your event planning. To access the Greener Events Toolkit follow this link; [Support for festivals and events - Dumfries and Galloway Council (dumgal.gov.uk)](https://dumgal.gov.uk/article/15762/)

1. **How Your Application Will be Assessed**

Applications will be considered by the Dumfries & Galloway Events Partnership. The Partnership will consider applications and score projects against a scoring framework based on the following criteria. The partnership will then provide recommendations to Elected Members of Dumfries and Galloway Council:

* How well the project fits with the aims and scope of the Fund.
* The financial viability of your project.
* The experience in festivals and events management of the applicant – or comparable management skills, if this is the first time your organisation is planning an event.
* Evidence in the application form that the festival or event is a Public Goods Event (see Guidance below).
* Evidence of community support for your project.
* Evidence of robust risk management and public health safety in your project planning.
* Evidence that you have considered how you are going to market your festival or event across Dumfries and Galloway, and that there is a budget to do so
* Evidence of value for money for public funding.
* Evidence that you are seeking to reduce the carbon footprint of your project.
* Evidence that your event can provide one source of entertainment or enjoyment for people affected by the cost of living crisis.
* Evidence that there is a project champion within your organisation for the festival or event you are seeking funding for
1. **Guidance Regarding the Application Form**

There are three questions in the application form where you may wish to refer to the following guidance before you complete these sections:

**Question 22 – Risk Management**

What risks have you identified that might affect the success of your event? Please describe the steps you take to counteract these risks.

In this section you may refer to your planning to avoid financial or other project risks to your event. Do you have good planning mechanisms in place to ensure, as far as possible, that your project will run smoothly?

**Question 23 – Public Goods Events**

The primary definitions and criteria for Public Goods Events, within the context of the Regional Events Growth Fund, are that:

* Your festival or event is operated on a not-for-profit basis.
* Substantive elements of your festival or event are free to view, and are important for the free access they create for all sectors of the population.
* Your festival or event is promoting an important regional asset.
* Your festival or event is helping to promote community wellbeing.
* The event has properties which are unique to Dumfries & Galloway.
* The event has widespread community and public support.
* It is recognised that the event requires a degree of public funding to take place.

The above list is intended to provide information and is not qualifying criteria for project applications. Further guidance on Public Goods Events is available upon request.

**Question 25 – Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is important to identify and outline how you will record the quality of your planning and measure the community and social benefits you forecast in your application. Identify how you will measure or evaluate:

* The numbers of visitors and participants to your festival or event.
* Visitors’ enjoyment of your festival or event.
* How effective was the risk assessment that you prepared for your festival or event (and changes you would make to it in future)?
* The quality of your marketing to local residents and visitors.
* Evidence of Council funding contributing to community leadership and events management skills.
* Your financial and budget planning
* Other benefits of the festival or event that your organisation feels is important.
1. **How to Apply**

For support and assistance with completing your application please email events@dumgal.gov.uk.

Please **email** your application and supporting documents to **grantapplications@dumgal.gov.uk** by **5pm on 24 November 2023**

Print and sign the declaration page, then email a scan or photograph to the address above, or post it to us at:

Festivals and Events, Dumfries and Galloway Council,

Militia House, English Street, Dumfries DG1 2HR **Phone** 0303 333 3000

Please ensure that all questions are answered and the required documentation is submitted with the application. If you’ve not received an acknowledgement within 14 days of sending us your application, please contact us.