



Funded by
UK Government



CRITERIA DOCUMENT

UKSPF Culture Fund: Grow and Maintain

A fund administered by

**Bedfordshire and Luton Community
Foundation**

On Behalf Of

Central Bedfordshire Council

Funded by Central Bedfordshire Council's UK Shared
Prosperity government grant allocation



Central
Bedfordshire

Please note that for this fund specifically we are encouraging creative individuals based in and working in Central Bedfordshire to approach this fund in partnership with organisations. Whilst the lead applicant for this fund must be an eligible organisation, we are particularly keen to see freelance creative and cultural practitioners as part of the partnership where relevant. Please check through this document for partnership approaches or get touch with us to see whether we can support you in alternative ways, including advice, signposting to other organisations, and introducing you to potential partners.

PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THIS SECTION AND MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

- You are or are working with a not-for-profit constituted group with clear charitable aims and objectives to make a real difference to the people within the community.
- Your lead organisation has a constitution or other governing document.
- Your lead organisation has a committee of at least three **unrelated** Trustees/Directors. If you have more than this the majority must be unrelated individuals with no financial interest in the organisation
- You are not applying for retrospective costs.
- You will be supporting residents in the Central Bedfordshire area
- You are not looking for a direct replacement for your statutory obligation and public funding.
- You do not hold a significant amount of free financial reserves.
- You are not using the funds for an appeal, sponsoring, or raising funds to redistribute to other causes.

If you've answered 'NO' to the questions above your organisation or proposed project may not be eligible. Please get in touch with us if you have any further questions.

INTRODUCTION

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) aims to deliver a new high-quality arts and culture grant scheme to support communities and deliver outcomes across its strategic objectives. Central Bedfordshire is home to approximately 294,300 people. Much of Central Bedfordshire has a suburban or rural feel with a fairly even split between people living in towns or rural areas. For further details see their website

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/27/about_your_council/180/statistics_and_census_information/2

The council plays a leadership and enabling role in supporting the culture sector. This grant scheme will support the culture sector and local community cultural activity within Central Bedfordshire. This fund is administered by the Bedfordshire & Luton Community Foundation (BLCF), on behalf of Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC).



UK Shared Prosperity Fund Aims and Objectives

The council was allocated money from the government's UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) programme. The overarching objectives for this element of the UKSPF are strengthening their social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural, and social ties and access to amenities, such as community infrastructure, and local green space, and community-led projects. Through targeted improvements to the built and natural environment, this grant scheme is an innovative approach to investing in the Central Bedfordshire culture sector to create quality places people want to live, work, play and learn in.

PRIORITIES FOR THE FUND

- **Place:** Encouraging a sense of pride in place. Celebrate and enrich the beauty, character, history and heritage of Central Bedfordshire through art and culture, fostering a sense of pride and belonging among residents.
- **Community:** Nurturing well-being and inclusivity. Cultivate a vibrant offer that promotes the well-being of its residents, nurtures strong and sustainable communities, brings communities together and ensures that everyone feels included.
- **Economy:** Creating a thriving arts and cultural sector. Support the development and growth of the arts and culture sector within Central Bedfordshire.

The Grow and Maintain funding strand specifically focuses on **priority 1: Place**. The fund is designed to support place-based interventions and partnerships in key areas in Central Bedfordshire.

Grant Scheme Outcomes and Outputs

The key outcomes and outputs of the grant scheme include but are not limited to:

- Increase in the number of users of facilities/amenities (footfall)
- Increase in improved perception of facilities/amenities.
- Improved perception/experienced accessibility
- Nurturing and championing local talent through self-development/CPD.
- Levelling-up cultural provision in key areas in Central Bedfordshire
- Identifying a community need and using arts and culture as a mechanism to address it.
- Improving reach and participation of underrepresented groups and communities



HOW MUCH CAN I APPLY FOR?

Grow and Maintain

In early 2024, groups were invited to apply for seed funding to pilot ideas in Central Bedfordshire and test new partnership ways of working. The aim of this was to encourage new ways of thinking about creative sector work in the county.

Following on from this pilot, we invite groups to submit applications for larger scale and wider-reaching work with the potential to have a sustainable impact on their direct communities. Whilst successfully-funded pilot applicants can apply for this next stage, we also invite new applicants with a proven track record and clear alignment to the fund priorities to apply in partnership to develop place-based responsive project proposals. We would strongly encourage partnership proposals from more than one stakeholder.

Grants of up to £20,000 are available to support place-based proposals.

Please note if you are developing something new or did not submit or were unsuccessful in your pilot funding application, we strongly recommend you get in touch with us before submitting your application.

WHAT CAN THE GRANT BE USED FOR?

Organisations must be delivering projects/initiatives in the Central Bedfordshire area, and must:

- Demonstrably support **fund priority 1: place** by proposing a place-based project proposal with local stakeholders, and be able to quantify impact against the funds priorities.
- Address the overall objectives of the fund.
- Projects must start before 31 March 2025 and be completed within a year.

Up to 15% of the grant can be used for core costs, such as rent and utilities. The rest should be used for project or activity delivery costs. If you are unsure about what this means, please get in touch with a member of the BLCF team who will be able to help either by phone: 01525 306690 or email administrator@blcf.org.uk

As part of BLCFs commitment to being an Equitable Funder, a key priority will be to support underrepresented and new growing communities.

ELIGIBILITY



We are only able to consider applications where the lead applicant is a not-for-profit constituted group that have clear charitable aims. Applications from the following types of organisations/groups will be considered:

- Registered UK charities, including charitable incorporated organisations.
- Constituted Community groups and non-registered charities.
- Companies Limited by Guarantee with clear charitable aims and without share capital.
- Community Interest Companies Limited by Guarantee without share capital, social enterprises, and community benefit societies (please review our guidance around CIC's and Social Enterprises before applying)
- Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs/PTFA's)
- Churches and other religious organisations (if the funded activity is not for religious purposes)

Furthermore, we will only fund projects and groups who:

- Are based in Central Bedfordshire if they are the lead partner (in a partnership) or applicant– must either have a registered address in Central Bedfordshire (home or organisational address) or evidence of their experience of working in Central Bedfordshire.
- Have a project idea to develop, deliver or support Cultural and Creative activity in Central Bedfordshire.

If you are applying in a partnership, then the organisation that submits the bid will be known as the **lead organisation** and must be an eligible entity from the list above. The lead organisation will manage the funds and be responsible for the outcome monitoring if successful. The lead organisation should have a **signed partnership agreement** with all the other organisations in the consortium. Please note that we may contact listed partners to check that they have agreed to be part of the delivery of any proposals.

Please speak to a member of the BLCF Grants team if you need help with creating a formal agreement document or wish to speak about the structure of your partnership.

EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS

Example 1: A collective of events producers, freelance artists, and community development workers want to put on a pilot festival to assess the feasibility of a new event. They have a formal partnership agreement with each other and the local authority to run a two-day mini-festival and employ and evaluator to build a case study.

Example 2: A local space wants to run a year-long engagement programme, trialling new partnerships with creative practitioners to increase footfall in the town centre. They have a formal partnership with a few key stakeholders, and also keep a record over the year of new networks and connections made, as well as working with local businesses to monitor footfall and get case studies of the impact on the town.



Example 3: A town or village wants to explore what it might be like to consider their town as an arts venue; commissioning a community arts producer to broker connections and opportunities for arts interventions in the public spaces and venues. They produce an 'arts month' and schedule a town wide schedule of events, showcasing local events and talent, and collaboratively commissioning high quality arts provision.

This list is just an indicator of the kinds of things you might want to consider. If you would like to see if your idea fits with the fund and are unsure, please contact us.

INELIGIBILITY

This fund is not open for applications from:

- Applications where those benefiting do not live in Central Bedfordshire.
- National charities and their affiliates who are not providing clear local benefits.
- Individuals as lead partner – individual artists must be attached to an eligible organisation.
- Private Businesses, Commercial ventures, and 'Community Interest Companies limited by Shares'.
- Organisations or activities that promote political parties or the propagation of religion or conduct of worship. (Religious organisations may apply for activities that demonstrate wider public benefit.)
- Organisations or activities which are inconsistent with public policy, i.e., the promotion of terrorism or of sectarian interests.
- Projects that should be funded from statutory sources.
- Applications from Local Authorities, Parish, and Town Councils where the work is either funded by Central Beds Council or is part of statutory work (we encourage collaboration with eligible lead partners for innovative approaches to non-statutory provision.)

WORK THAT CANNOT BE SUPPORTED

- General appeals or sponsorship
- Work normally funded from statutory sources or undertaken by or on behalf of statutory bodies.
- Work undertaken by/ on behalf of schools, colleges or universities as part of their statutory curricular activities.
- Work where the main beneficiaries are animals.
- Work which does not directly benefit people living in the area of benefit.
- Overseas holidays, trips, or expeditions
- Retrospective grants i.e., for items already purchased or activity that has already started.
- Animal welfare, unless the project benefits people (e.g., disabled riding schemes)
- Medical research and equipment for statutory or private healthcare



- Applications that support the furtherance of any one religion or political party.

Organisations that have not fully completed all sections of the grant application form, provided all other requested information and documents or who have not answered any subsequent questions put to them will be withdrawn.

DECISION- MAKING PROCESS

All applications will be reviewed and are subject to a thorough assessment and relevant due diligence checks by BLCF. Details about our checks can be found on our website, www.blcf.org.uk. **Only those applications that best meet the criteria for the fund will be shortlisted accordingly, with these then being considered by the grants panel.** The panel is made up of local individuals & donor representatives and we reserve the right to decline or accept any application, according to the decision of the panel.

Only requests for funding made via the official online application form will be considered. The form can be accessed via our website under the appropriate grants tab: www.blcf.org.uk

The deadline for applications will be 9th January 2025 at 5pm. Organisations can apply at any time during this time period; however, we advise putting your application in as early as possible. We reserve the right to close applications early if there is an unprecedented response.

Final decisions will be made by the end of January 2025, approved by Central Bedfordshire Council and will be ratified by the BLCF Board of Trustees, in accordance with our grantmaking policy. We will contact applicants by email to notify them of the outcome.



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

We require the following supporting documents to be uploaded with your application:



- Your **annual accounts**, or if you do not have full accounts due to being a new organisation, either a summary of income and expenditure or a forecast of income and expenditure
- Your **governing document**
- A **bank statement** in the name of your organisation dated within the last 3 months
- **Equal opportunities** and **safeguarding policies** for children and vulnerable adults
- A list of your lead organisation **trustees and/or directors**.

Your bank statement must show the name of your organisation and be dated within the last 3 months, as well as clearly show your sort code and account number. **We will also ask for a copy of the signed partnership agreement** signed by all organisations working on the project, clearly defining roles and responsibilities where appropriate.

If you have any concerns about this, please get in touch with us on 01525 306690 or email administrator@blcf.org.uk for further advice.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Successful organisations will be required to complete an end of project report. We will be asking how the grant was spent, outcomes achieved, the difference the work has made, and any key issues and lessons learnt. Funded organisations should be willing to discuss the progress of the activity over the phone as and when necessary, and to host visits from BLCF staff that will assist with learning and best practice.

Before you submit your grant application, we suggest you consider:

- Who will write the end of grant monitoring form report and
- What your aims and objectives are and how will you track progress against these

Reporting templates will be sent out with your offer letter should you be successful.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and to valuing diversity regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, nationality, religion/belief, culture, language, disability, learning difficulty, sexual orientation, marital status, economic status, health status, or any other discriminatory grounds.

We expect your organisation to also be committed to the promotion of equality, cohesion, and inclusion.

Should you have any queries about this criteria or applying to this fund please contact Rae Rahman rae.rahman@blcf.org.uk or administrator@blcf.org.uk who will be able to help or they can be reached via the main office number on 01525 306690.



**Central
Bedfordshire**

**Central
Bedfordshire
in contact**