General Criteria, Guide to the Application Process and Terms and Conditions of Funding

Community Grants

1 Introduction

1.1 Cumbria County Council has established a grants scheme for voluntary and non-profit-making groups. Grants are available for groups who are involved in community projects and initiatives that benefit the residents of a community within Cumbria.

1.2 Community Grants are coordinated by the County Council's six Area Support Teams and applicants are advised to contact their local Area Office for advice and guidance in advance of making an application for funding.

1.3 Funding is organised on a geographical basis according to the total population in each area.

1.4 In awarding funds we aim to ensure that the application process is easy to understand and made clear to all applicants, while at the same time ensuring sufficient information is gathered to promote value for money, fairness in decision making, public accountability and avoidance of fraud or misuse of funds, reflecting the highest standards of public sector financial management.

2 The community grants fund – criteria for funding

2.1 Grants from this fund are awarded to groups who are involved in community based projects and initiatives that will benefit the local area. The Community Grants Fund is intended to invest in communities to bring about a positive and lasting change for the benefit of the whole community.

2.2 Projects and/or initiatives will be assessed on their ability to contribute to the achievement of the County Council Plan, Local Area Plan and locally identified community priorities.

2.3 Each of the six Local Committees across Cumbria have identified local priorities as part of a Local Area Plan. An information sheet outlining the key County Council priorities along with the Local Area priorities is available from your local area office. It is recommended that you contact your local area office for details of these funding priorities before you make an application for funding.

2.4 The following criteria must be met in order to be eligible for funding under this community grants scheme:

i Grants will be given only to voluntary and non-profit making groups and organisations to support community initiatives that benefit residents of Cumbria.

ii Grants should support the achievement of the County Council's Local Area Plan as agreed by the Local Area Committee. In addition, projects and initiatives should fit with locally identified priorities or plans e.g. Division Profiles, Community Plans, Parish Plans, etc.

iii Grants will be awarded for one-off project costs e.g. purchase of equipment, building work, refurbishment costs, etc.

iv Grant applications will be considered for non-recurring expenditure only, therefore operational running costs, general maintenance costs (energy bills, insurance), or ongoing staffing costs will not be funded unless the application is for start-up costs.

v Applications will be considered from constituted groups only, we do not accept applications from individuals.

vi   Applications for less than 100% of costs are preferred and groups are advised to try other avenues for funding in addition to this fund.

vii   We will not normally accept more than one application for funding per organisation or group in any one financial year. We may accept more than one application from the same group for clearly identifiable different projects in the same financial year.

viii   Projects from Schools and Churches or other religious groups cannot be funded unless they have a clear wider non-religious community benefit e.g. a church hall that is used by local community groups, a play area also open for public use, etc.

ix   Organisations or groups that operate a policy of exclusivity or have a closed membership and is thereby not open to any member of the public will not be considered for funding.

x   We cannot fund community events if they are intended to pass on any surplus income to other organisations, e.g. concerts with benefits to "local charities".

xi   Grant applications will not be considered from political organisations.

xii   Grants will not be awarded retrospectively i.e. grants will only be awarded for work or resources still to be purchased at the time the application is made.

xiii   Organisations or groups with outstanding Project Completion Reports (PCR's) will not be considered for funding.

3   The application process

3.1   Applications for funding should be made on our application form and supported by all requested supporting documentation.

3.2   Application forms are available from your local Area Support Office or can be downloaded from our website **cumbria.gov.uk/communitygrants**

3.3   You can fill in an electronic version of the application form using Microsoft Word and email it to us but we must receive a hard copy of the application with at least two signatures along with the appropriate supporting documents in order for us to process it.

3.4   Completed application forms must be signed and returned with the following supporting documents:

- A minimum of **two Estimates/Quotes** from two different independent suppliers.

- A detailed **breakdown of all costs** associated with your application for funding.

- A copy of a recent **Bank Statement** for all accounts held in the name of your group.

- A copy of your most recent **Annual Accounts or Audited Accounts.**

- Your **Equal Opportunities Policy or Statement** (where not explicit in Constitution).

- Your **Constitution** or other governing documents.

- A copy of your last **Annual Report** and/or **AGM minutes**.

- Your **Child Protection Policy**, where appropriate.

- Your **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy**, where appropriate.

3.5   Incomplete applications or applications that do not include all of the above documentation cannot be considered for funding.

3.15 We may contact you to ask for more details about your project or possibly arrange to visit your organisation. We will be pleased to help you with any queries you may have in relation to the supporting information you are required to provide in advance of submitting your completed application.

4   How your application is dealt with

4.1   Upon receipt of an application for funding we will make an initial assessment to check that the application is eligible for funding against the criteria of the scheme and that all supporting documentation has been provided.

4.2   We aim to acknowledge receipt of all applications within 10 working days of receiving the application.

4.3 An evaluation report will be produced for each eligible application along with a recommendation for funding.

4.4 A community forum or grant panel made up of councillors and/or community leaders from the area will discuss the application and make a final recommendation for funding.

4.5 Once your application has been considered and a decision has been made we will inform you by letter and if you have been successful we will arrange for the funds to be released.

5 Unsuccessful or ineligible applications

5.1 Applicants whose applications are unsuccessful or ineligible will be notified by letter and receive feedback on the reasons for the failure of the grant application within two weeks of the decision.

6 Payment of funding

6.1 Funding approved for payment can now be paid directly into a group or organisation bank account via the Bank Automated Credit System (BACS).

6.2 Once authorised the council's Financial Services department will arrange for funding to be paid directly into the group or organisation bank account as detailed in the application form.

7 Project completion reports (PCR's)

7.1 As part of the conditions of funding you are required to complete and return a Project Completion Report (PCR) within six months of receiving funding.

7.2 The PCR process is designed to assist you in evaluating the success of your project or initiative and also provides an evidence base for the council's internal audit process. As part of the PCR you will be required to provide supporting documentation e.g. receipts, invoices, bank statements, etc to evidence the expenditure of the funding awarded.

7.3 Organisations or groups who do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Completion Report may be required to return their funding and will not be considered for future funding.

8 Promotion of our funding support

8.1 We require that groups and organisations recognise Cumbria County Council's funding support by highlighting this on all promotional materials in relation to the project or initiative e.g. acknowledgement in any press releases issued by the group, posters, flyers, website, etc.

9 Terms and conditions of funding for Cumbria County Council

9.1 You are required to maintain a bank account in the name of the group. All withdrawals from the account should require a minimum of two signatures.

9.2 Grants awarded must be spent only on the purpose for which is stated within your application. If for any reason your circumstances change and you wish to vary the way in which you spend your grant you are required to contact us and request written permission to do so.

9.3 You are required to provide access to all necessary documentation (see guidance notes & criteria) to support your application for funding.

9.4 Financial support provided by Cumbria County Council should be acknowledged on all printed publicity and in information given to the press and media.

9.5 Your organisation or group should promote equality of opportunity and eliminate all forms of discrimination. Your commitment to this should be clearly identified in a written policy or statement that takes into account current legislation and good practice.

9.6 In the event of your organisation ceasing to operate or failing to undertake or complete the activity for which the grant was offered, the County Council reserves the right to withhold payment, reduce its award or seek recovery.

9.7 You will be required to submit a Project Completion Report six months after any grant award has been paid. Organisations or groups who do not complete and return a satisfactory Project Completion Report may be required to return their funding and will not be considered for future funding.

Contact Us

Allerdale Community Development Team
Health, Care and Community Services
Cumbria County Council
West Cumbria House
Jubilee Road Workington
CA14 4HB
Tel: **01900 706013**

Barrow Community Development Team
Health, Care and Community Services
Cumbria County Council
Nan Tait Centre
Abbey Road
Barrow-in-Furness
CUMBRIA LA14 1LG
Tel: **01229 407312**

Carlisle Community Development Team
Health, Care and Community Services
Cumbria County Council
Cumbria House
107 -117 Botchergate
Carlisle
CUMBRIA CA1 1RD
Tel: **01228 226730**

Copeland Community Development Team
Health, Care and Community Services
Cumbria County Council
Cleator Moor Library
The Square
Cleator Moor
CUMBRIA CA25 5AP
Tel: **01946 505020**

Eden Community Development Team
Health, Care and Community Services
Cumbria County Council
Penrith Community Fire Station
Carleton Avenue
Penrith
CUMBRIA
CA10 2FA
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South Lakeland Community Development Team
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