



Guidance: Applying for a Community Building Grant

If you have any communication support needs that make reading this guidance or completing an application form difficult or impossible, please contact us on 0141 353 4321 or funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk to discuss alternative ways to apply.

Who and what are Community Building Grants for?

- For registered charities working in Scotland, with an annual income* of £25,000 to £2 million, that support people who are experiencing (or are at risk of experiencing) poverty or trauma, from a building which meets our definition of a community hub*
- Capital funding** of £2,000 to £75,000 towards the costs of community buildings
- Apply any time – no set closing date.

*Definitions

Annual Income: This is based on the money your organisation received in the last financial year, as shown in your most recent annual accounts. If you are a new organisation, which has not yet produced accounts, you can base this on the income you expect to bring in in the year ahead. As a general rule, we will only accept applications for Community Building Grants from charities whose annual income is between £25K and £2M. There are some cases where we will make exceptions, for example, if your income last year was less than £25K but you are growing your activities and projecting increased costs; or if your income was over £2M due to one-off funding for a capital project, or additional services delivered to support your community during the pandemic. If you would like to be considered for a Community Building Grant but you're still not sure if it's right for your charity, please call us on 0141 353 4321 to discuss.

We define a community hub as a building (or part of a building) that is multi-purpose, is open or accessible to local people and has a community-led governance structure. It hosts a range of activities and services that the local community needs, and is used by lots of different people. For a fuller description, see 'What type of building will you fund?' on the next page.

Capital funding: can be spent on the purchase of capital or fixed assets such as buildings or equipment that has a life expectancy of more than one year. Capital can include labour / development costs associated with the creation of the asset, including any specialist technical support required.

Who can't apply?

- **Charities who already hold capital funding from the Trust, excluding a Community Vehicle Grant.** You can reapply once your current capital award has ended and you've sent us your End of Grant Report.
- **Charities who unsuccessfully applied** to our previous Open Grants programme (which closed in early 2020) within the past 12 months. You can reapply once 12 months from the date of your decline email has passed.
- **Housing Associations and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs).** These types of organisation are not currently eligible for funding from us. However, we are committed to reviewing our guidance and criteria across the course of our strategy. To be kept informed, please [sign up to our mailing list on our website](#).

What do I need to apply?

- **A minimum of three unconnected Trustees on your charity's Board.** By unconnected we mean not related by blood; married to each other; in a relationship with each other or living together at the same address.
- **Recent independently examined or audited annual accounts.** If your organisation is a newly registered charity which has not yet produced accounts, we'll ask you to send us details of an independent referee, a recent bank statement and a projection showing your organisation's expected income for its first year.
- **A safeguarding policy.** If your organisation directly supports children and young people or vulnerable adults, we would expect you to have an appropriate policy document which sets out how you will keep them safe.
- **A policy on equality and diversity.** We want to know that your organisation has a written agreement detailing how you will avoid discriminating against people, and how you will create a safe and inclusive atmosphere both within your workplace and for the people you support.

- Your charity must own the site or building where the work will take place, or hold a **long-term lease** (minimum ten years).

What type of building will you fund?

We can only award a Community Building Grant to charities whose building is managed and used in a way which meets our definition of a community hub, as follows:

A community hub is a building (or part of a building) that is multi-purpose and open or accessible to local people. It provides or hosts a range of activities and services that the local community needs, and is used by lots of different people.

It should have a community-led governance structure – that means the formal decisions about running and managing the building are taken by people who come mainly from within the community itself. A community hub is a building for the entire community, sustainable at local level and providing specialised services as required.

Quick checklist:

- ✓ Multi-purpose, open and accessible to the local community
- ✓ Provides and hosts a range of activities and services that are used by the entire community in response to need
- ✓ Community-led governance structure (i.e. formal decisions about running and managing the building are taken by people who come mainly from within the community itself).

What type of work will you fund a building for?

Our Community Building Grants, as with all our funding, are aimed at charities helping people and communities in Scotland who are experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) poverty, trauma or both.

With this capital funding, we want to support the physical development and/or improvement of buildings that will be used to host or deliver a range of work addressing the impacts of poverty and/or trauma under one or more of these themes:

1. **Financial wellbeing:** addressing the financial and material effects of poverty on people and communities. We are interested in funding buildings that will be used for work which:
 - helps people who are struggling with day to day costs

- creates access to advice, support and advocacy around welfare, debt, income maximisation; housing and employment advice and improving access to quality childcare.
2. **Emotional wellbeing and relationships:** ensuring people have emotional wellbeing, and confidence and strength in their relationships with others. We are interested in funding buildings that will be used for work which:
- engages with families, supports parents/carers around child attachment and relationships, and their wider socio-economic and life circumstances
 - supports individuals to address issues around mental health and wellbeing, including addressing their own experiences of trauma/ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and shame and stigma associated with poverty
 - reduces involvement in risk-taking behaviours (e.g. violence, problem drug use, self-harm, abusive relationships, criminal behaviour)
 - creates spaces for social interaction and connection to address isolation and loneliness
 - builds community resilience to meet the challenges presented by poverty/trauma.
3. **Educational and work pathways:** equipping people for the future through learning and skills pathways. We are interested in funding buildings that will be used for work which:
- supports educational engagement and attainment (including engagement of parents and wider family members)
 - supports people with the transition through education and training into work
 - supports people with the skills they need to gain and retain employment.

Across all three of these themes, we can fund community buildings used to support work that:

- meets people's **immediate needs** around poverty or trauma
- provides **earlier help** which aims to prevent or reduce the likelihood of experiencing negative outcomes relating to poverty and/or trauma
- tests **new approaches** or does **more of what works**
- is **universal** (aimed at a wide group of people or an entire community) or **targeted** (focusing on a specific beneficiary group, e.g. young people), as long as it shows how it will meet the needs of people (at risk of)

experiencing poverty or trauma.

Groups of people affected by poverty and trauma:

We would like to fund community buildings used to support work that is aimed at these specific groups of people who we know are more likely to experience poverty or trauma, although we will also consider work not specifically aimed at these groups.

- Women
- People with a disability
- People from BAME backgrounds
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- People experiencing severe and multiple disadvantage
- People living in certain geographical locations (particularly remote and rural ones)
- Older people
- Certain family groups (larger families, single parents, people with care experience etc.)
- Young people under 25.

Examples of funding requests we would consider:

We will only consider funding requests where it is clear how the building:

- a) meets our definition of a community hub, as above, and
- b) supports your organisation's work in addressing poverty/trauma, as above.

Examples of the type of request we might consider include:

- A small request from a small community hub, owned and operated by a management committee made up from local residents, who want to install a Changing Places toilet designed to meet the needs of people with complex care needs – so ensuring their facility is fully accessible for all.
- A large request from a charity established to build a brand-new community hub to provide services aimed at those who face barriers to accessing services in their communities. They have the land on a ten-year lease and plan to build their new hub in a rural and/or a deprived community, which does not have access to an alternative facility locally.
- A well-used community hub requesting funding to refurbish or retrofit their facility with new pieces of equipment or spaces, which will improve their ability to meet the needs of its community.

How much can I apply for?

One-off capital funding of between £2,000 and £75,000 for costs relating to:

- new buildings
- the upgrading of buildings
- refurbishment costs

The amount of funding will depend on the total cost of the project or works and will take into consideration the function of the building in relation to our definition of a community hub.

We assess each application on its own merits, but we have in place a sliding scale for funding which we use as a starting point for calculating levels of awards.

Project costs of £15,000 to £100,000 →
£2,000 to a maximum of £15,000*

Project costs of over £100,000 to £250,000 →
up to a maximum of £25,000 grant

Project costs of over £250,000 to £500,000
→ up to a maximum of £50,000 grant

Project costs of over £500,000 →
up to a maximum of £75,000 grant

**based on 15% of project costs*

We plan to share examples of these considerations in practice through case studies and other communications messaging on our website.

- If you are applying for a grant of up to £15,000, you don't need to have any funding in place before you apply.
- For larger requests of more than £15,000, we expect you to have 25% of the total project costs secured before you apply. If you do not have sufficient match funding in place to enable us to progress your application, we will advise you that we wish to hold your application until you have secured further funding. We cannot consider 'in-kind' costs as

secured funding.

- If your organisation also needs revenue funding, you can apply separately for one of our revenue grants in addition to funding for a community building. [Find out more on our website.](#)

What will not be considered for funding?

- Projects or buildings outside Scotland
- Applications for capital funding if the work of your organisation does not address poverty or trauma through one or more of our themes outlined above
- A building that does not fully meet our definition of a community hub, as outlined above
- Capital work on buildings not owned by the applicant, or on land which the applicant does not have a long-term lease of at least ten years
- Standalone purchase costs of buildings and/or land
- Buildings that are primarily used for the delivery of projects and activities which incorporate the promotion of politics or religion
- Applications for subsequent phases of capital projects, where we have already contributed towards the initial or earlier phase
- Costs of statues and memorials
- Minor repairs and maintenance such as painting, landscaping or other routine work
- Landscaping or equipment for playgrounds, parks or recreation areas
- Removal or relocation costs
- Any retrospective costs already incurred by the applicant
- Onward distribution of funds to another organisation or charity.

What do we look for in an application?

We consider a number of key criteria when assessing applications. As well as meeting the basic requirements and fit with our themes, as outlined above, we want organisations who apply for a Community Building Grant to demonstrate how they:

1. **Focus on poverty and trauma:** recognise the challenges people in their community are facing in their lives related to poverty and trauma, as well as

how their organisation's work will respond to this and support them.

2. **Focus on community:** involve their community in the organisation, for example on the Board or through volunteering; and that they listen to their community and respond to their needs. By community, we mean either a geographic community or a community of interest.
3. **Focus on collaboration:** by showing that they are aware of other groups and services in their area and are linked in with them.
4. **Focus on relationships:** by showing that their work clearly has a relational focus and that this is reflected in their policies and governance, for example how they involve members or participants, and that they apply a rights-based approach in their work (i.e. that they treat people with fairness, dignity and respect).

Other criteria we consider include:

- **The organisation's financial position**, including its sustainability and whether it has an immediate need for our funds
- **How well the organisation is governed** and, where appropriate, the safeguarding policies and arrangements it has in place
- **The size of the capital project or request** relative to the nature and scale of services (so that any grant we award you is proportionate).

You'll find more information about what we look for in an application and [what's important to us on our website](#).

How do I apply?

We consider Community Building applications as part of a rolling programme of funding. You can apply at any time, bearing in mind our timescale for decisions, detailed below. You can download a copy of our application questions and help text [here](#).

Please provide the following supporting documents to help us consider your application:

- ✓ A copy of your most recent independently examined or audited accounts
- ✓ Any site plans, architectural drawings, or equipment specifications
- ✓ External quotes or estimates for the proposed work
- ✓ Business plan or financial projections.

Please note: if you do not provide the relevant documents with your

application, it may delay the time it takes us to make a decision on your request.

What happens next?

1. **We'll email you to confirm** we've got your application and when you can expect to receive a decision.
2. **We'll aim to tell you the outcome of your application within 8-12 weeks.** This is dependent on receiving any additional information we may ask for – delays in receiving this extra information could mean the decision takes longer.
3. **We'll send all correspondence about your application via email,** so it's important that the email addresses and contact details you provide in your application are correct. We'll normally contact the person you've listed as the 'application contact' in the first instance, so it's helpful if this person is available during the assessment period. Please let us know if there are any changes to the contact details provided.
4. **We'll assign one of our Funding Officers to assess your application.** They may get in touch with you during the assessment period and will be able to help you with any changes or updates you might need to make to your application.

If we award you funding:

1. **If you have been awarded funding, we'll email you to let you know.**
Before we can pay your funds, we'll ask you to provide:
 - A copy of a recent bank statement for your organisation's account, from within the past three months
 - Evidence that you have secured the balance of funds needed for your capital project
 - Confirmation of when the work will start.
2. We'll do our best to **pay the funds** to your organisation's bank account within two weeks.
3. **If we have awarded you less than £5,000, you don't need to send us a report** at the end of your grant year. However, we would love to hear from you if there's anything you do want to share with us. You can send us pictures, videos, quotes or anything else to funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk

4. **If we have awarded you £5,000 or more**, we'll ask that you send us a brief End of Grant Report telling us how the building has helped support your work in addressing poverty/trauma. You can send us pictures, videos, quotes or anything else to funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk
5. As we release payments in advance which are expected to cover a 12-month period, we ask that you **wait 12 months** from the date your grant is paid before reapplying for another Community Building Grant. However, this cannot be for any subsequent phases of capital projects, where we have already contributed towards the initial or earlier phase.

If we don't award you funding:

1. **We'll send you an email in which we'll try our best to explain why we've not awarded you funding.** We will also let you know in our email how soon you can re-apply. If the reason we haven't awarded you funding is something we think you can address, you may be able to re-apply once you have been able to do so. We'll explain this in the email.
2. **If you would like to have a chat** with us about our decision and whether – or how soon – you can reapply, you can email us on funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk and your Funding Officer will get back to you within five working days.

Feel free to get in touch

If you have any questions about applying for a Community Building Grant, please contact us on 0141 353 4321 or funding@therobertsontrust.org.uk

We've done our best to make sure the above guidance is clear. However, if you have any feedback on this, we'd welcome the chance to talk to you about it.