Local Communities Fund

Revenue & Capital Programmes

Autumn Launch 2023

Guidance for Applicants

This document aims to assist organisations that would like to apply for Revenue and/or Capital funding from the Local Communities Fund

Nottinghamshire County Council

LCF Revenue & Capital 2022-26

Information for Applicants (Autumn launch 2023)

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Introduction: The Local Communities Fund (LCF)

Nottinghamshire County Council recognises the huge contribution that the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) has made to the lives of residents over many years, which has been brought into sharp focus during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council has a strong record in supporting the VCS by empowering local communities to be more self-sufficient. This continues to be a key priority for the Council and supporting the VCS to grow and thrive is central to achieving this.

The Council's recovery plan for helping to address the impact of the pandemic provides opportunities to invest in the VCS to help support the delivery of <u>the Nottinghamshire Plan Vision and Ambitions.</u>

The **Local Communities Fund** is a **discretionary financial contribution** awarded by Nottinghamshire County Council to support the delivery of projects that help to deliver the strategic aims of the County Council and the Local Communities Fund.

This document provides guidance for organisations interested in applying for Revenue and/or Capital funding. Whilst some criteria are the same for both funds, there are some differences, so please read carefully.

Revenue Programme

Applications for Revenue funding are invited from VCS organisations that have developed effective activities in response to a local need / gap analysis, in particular activities that:

- Contribute to a prosperous and growing economy
- Deliver School Holiday Play Schemes
- Enable Nottinghamshire residents to contribute to social and cultural opportunities
- Encourage innovation to strengthen communities and support vulnerable residents
- Encourage local networks where people help themselves and each other to be resilient, neighbourly and safe
- Increase volunteering opportunities that enable more vulnerable residents to be supported
- Help to address climate and environmental change
- Help to improve mental health
- Help to improve physical health
- Help to reduce loneliness
- Improve access to existing community-based services (e.g. advice and signposting), for the most vulnerable residents
- Offer early help and prevention to those who most need it
- Provide support to communities of interest, for example rural communities.

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The Autumn 2023 launch of the LCF Revenue Programme consists of a Revenue **Small Grants** Scheme. Please note that:

- The **closing date** for this Revenue application window is **Tuesday 24th November 2023.**
- The **maximum award** will be **£5,000** per project in any financial year.
- Successful organisations will be offered a **12-month funding agreement**.
- The Council anticipates launching another Revenue Small Grants scheme in the Spring 2024, subject to budget availability.

Revenue funding can help towards the running costs ('core costs' or 'overheads') that are essential to delivering the project / service as described in the application for funding, such as:

- Utilities (e.g. gas, electricity & water bills)
- Communications (e.g. internet, landline & telephone)
- Rent
- Insurance & professional fees
- Relevant staff salaries and staff training
- Volunteer training and volunteer expenses.

Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is designed to contribute to improvements of facilities or purchase assets that support community access and improve health and well-being. Eligible organisations can apply for one-off Capital grants up to a maximum of £20,000 per organisation in any funding year.

Applications for Capital funding should have in place at least 50% match funding and should show how the proposed project:

- Helps to address local priorities e.g. improving access to new or existing services such as sports and leisure, protecting the environment, reducing loneliness, improving physical and mental health
- Improves local places and spaces that are important to communities
- Brings people together and involves them in the design and implementation
- Helps to address climate and environmental change and/or minimises any negative impact on the environment.

Please note that:

- The **closing date** for this Capital application window is **Tuesday 24th November 2023.**
- The **maximum award** will be **£20,000** per project in any financial year.
- Successful organisations will be offered a **12-month funding agreement**.
- The Council anticipates launching another Capital Grants scheme in Spring 2024, subject to budget availability.

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Examples of how the Capital funding could be used include:

- Improvements to sporting facilities which help to improve wellbeing and access for all.

- New outdoor play equipment (including accessible outdoor equipment) to provide an exciting and safe play area for local children and families, offering opportunities for physical activity and community interaction in an open, public space.

- Green / horticultural improvements to open spaces such as the development of an 'all year round' community garden for the benefit of all members of the community.

- Memorial and heritage improvements, such as the construction of a permanent and accessible paved foundation for a memorial dedicated to RAF aircrew who were killed in flying incidents during WWII.

- Signs and information or interpretation boards that improve the community and/or visitor experience such as brown tourist signs to direct visitors to Nottinghamshire attractions, signposts and information boards that include points of interest within a park, gateway signs upon entering a village.

Brown Tourist Signs / Information Boards / Gateway Signs / Interactive Signs
If you wish to apply for funding towards brown tourist signs / information boards / gateway signs / interactive signs, please read the '**General Guidance and Example Costs for Signs**' document

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What type of organisations are eligible to apply for LCF Revenue & Capital funding?

The Council encourages applications from **eligible organisations**. Eligible organisations include:

- ✓ Charities registered with the Charity Commission* (e.g. Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIOs), unincorporated associations, trust or charitable / not-for-profit companies limited by guarantee).

- ✓ Voluntary / community groups that are <u>not</u> registered as a charity (e.g. the group could be set up as an 'unincorporated association' or an 'excepted' charity as defined by the Charity Commission*).

- ✓ Friendly Societies or Industrial and Provident (Community Benefit) Societies with charitable purposes and registered with an appropriate regulator.

- ✓ Community Benefit or Cooperative Societies.

- ✓ Community Interest Companies (CICs) with charitable aims, a community purpose and limited by guarantee.

- ✓ Social enterprises that are set up using a recognised legal form.

- ✓ Sports clubs – clubs that have achieved or are working towards Clubmark are particularly welcome.

- ✓ Parish or Town Councils (<u>Capital funding only</u>)

Please refer to the Charity Commission for further information.

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Who can't apply?

- National Organisations - a national charity (or local branch thereof) that cannot adequately evidence that funding is being solely spent in Nottinghamshire or for the benefit of the residents of Nottinghamshire.
- Borough and District Councils.
- Anyone / any organisation who is applying on behalf of another organisation.
- A District Council acting as an accountable body for a local voluntary / community group.
- Companies that can pay profits to directors, shareholders, or members (including companies limited by shares).
- Sole traders and individuals.

Funding criteria

The funding criteria applies to the Revenue and Capital Programmes, unless otherwise stated.

Community engagement: Organisations are encouraged to involve the community in the design, development, and delivery of the project.

County Councillor Role: In line with the principle of involving County Councillors (Elected Members) in their communities, all Revenue and Capital applications must provide a supporting statement from an elected Nottinghamshire County Councillor for the District in which the proposed project / asset will be delivered or installed.

The supporting statement can be a letter, email or video recording, which can be uploaded and submitted with your application.

Please note that:

- County Councillor support is <u>not</u> a guarantee of application success.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to contact the relevant County Councillor to discuss the proposed project and to seek their support.

> **The contact details for all Nottinghamshire County Councillors are available online:** www.nottscc.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/councillors/contact-a-councillor

Governance: Governance is about the way your organisation is set up and run. The Council is accountable for public funds and therefore reviewing the governance arrangements that organisations have in place helps to reassure the Council that an organisation is:

- Operating in line with the law AND in line with relevant regulation;
- Operating in line with its own governing document; and,
- Able to effectively manage public funds and fulfil the monitoring requirements.

Good governance is essential for your organisation, service users and other stakeholders, as it underpins the delivery of quality projects in a safe and efficient way and can help to reassure other potential funders and partners.

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To satisfy the Local Communities Fund requirements, applicants must ensure that they have satisfactory governance arrangements in place.

A Good Governance checklist is available in <u>Appendix 1</u> to this document, which applicants may find useful as a starting point when reviewing the governance arrangements for your organisation.

Match Funding: Local Communities Fund funding is a <u>contribution</u> to the delivery of a project. This means that the funding is not intended to cover the full project costs and therefore match funding will be required. **Organisations will need to raise the match funding before applying and will be asked to provided details of <u>confirmed</u> match funding on their application form.** There is a high demand for funding and as such, match-funded projects enable the Council to support a broader range of projects. A match funding approach also helps to show shared support and commitment to the project from all parties concerned. Note that:

- Organisations must have in place **at least 50% of the total project cost from other sources** (i.e. match funding).
- Match funding can include grants and donations from other organisations, member subscription fees and fundraising (and where appropriate, contributions 'in-kind').
- Organisations should ensure that any grant awarded is not 'double-funding' (e.g. the grant must not be used to pay for the same items paid for by other means).
- To make best use of the funds the County Council aims to invest in Capital projects with full match-funding already in place, so they are 'ready to go'.

The following criteria also applies to Capital projects:

Public use and legacy: The asset that the Capital funding contributes to will need to remain in public use and leave a legacy for at least three years after the asset has been purchased and installed / launched / is first in use.

Maintenance: Capital funding can be used to help with the initial cost of the project, however it <u>cannot</u> be used for ongoing maintenance. Therefore, organisations must ensure that they have plans and funds in place to maintain the project for at least three years.

Ownership: The applying Organisation must be able to evidence title to the land / property or provide evidence of permission to use the land / property for the proposed project.

Is your organisation ready to apply?

It is strongly recommended that you carefully read all the information provided in this document to help decide if your organisation is ready to complete an application for funding.

The first part of the application form includes the eligibility questions. If your organisation does not meet all the eligibility criteria, it will not be considered for this round of funding. Your organization is welcome to apply in a future round when the eligibility criteria is fully met.

The next section provides information about 'How to Apply'

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How to Apply

Register and Login to your Account

If this is the first time you are applying for funding from the Local Communities Fund (LCF), you will need to register an account on the online grant system (Good Grants)

Registering for an account is easy!

1. Go to http://grants.nottinghamshire.gov.uk
2. Complete the registration questions and click 'register'

Verification step: To protect your identity, a **verification step** is required. After you click 'Register', you will see the following message:

An email has been sent to [email address] for verification. You will need to click the verification link in the email.
If you don't see the verification email within a couple of minutes, please check your spam or junk folder.
Resend verification email

To verify your email address, simply click on the verification link in your email.

Login to your account: Once you have clicked the verification link in your email, you can login to your account and apply for funding. To log into your account:

1. Click on: http://grants.nottinghamshire.gov.uk
2. In the 'Login' area, enter your **email address** and the **password** that you set up at the registration stage and click **'login'**

Note: If you forget your password, no need to worry. In the login page, simply click on the **'forgot password'** link and follow the instructions.

Apply for Revenue and/or Capital LCF Funding

If you haven't done so already, please register and / or login to your Good Grants account (see previous section).

1. Under 'My Applications' click '**Start Application**'
2. Under '**Funding Stream**' select the Fund that you would like to apply for (i.e. Revenue, or Capital) and the relevant year of application.
3. Under '**Applicant Name**', please provide the name of the applying <u>organisation</u>
4. Complete all other question, then click **'Save and Next'**
5. Complete the rest of the application.

Notes:

- You will need to upload a **supporting statement** from the relevant District County Councillor. The supporting statement can be a letter, email or video recording.
- In the **Policies and Procedures** section, you will be asked to confirm that your organisation has the following documents, and that they will be made available to the Council on request:
  - o Governing document (except for Parish and Town Councils)
  - o Current Public Liability Insurance certificate
  - o Policies: Health and Safety, Equality and Diversity & Safeguarding
  - o Confirmation of additional funding
  - o Any other information or documents as requested by the County Council.
- **Applications for Capital funding:** If your organisation is applying for Capital funding, in addition to the above, you will also be asked to upload the following:
  - o A **quote** for the proposed project (providing a quote helps to show that the proposed project costs are realistic). Where possible, obtain at least three quotations and attach the quote which represents the 'best value'.
  - o Permission to use land or buildings from the owner (or permission / consent from VIA Highways), as appropriate & where applicable.
- Complete the **'Second Contact'** section
- When you have completed all sections of the application *and* uploaded all required supporting documents, click **'Submit'** (you can save and complete your application later if you wish).

What happens after I submit my application?

You will receive an email to confirm that your application has been submitted. If you would like a copy of your application, you can login to your account to download it at any time.

Next steps if your Revenue or Capital application is successful

- If your application is approved for funding, you will receive an email notification. The email will contain a link to your online grant account where you can login to view your award offer.
- **If you would like to accept the award offer, you will need to sign the Agreement as instructed in your online account.**

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- Where appropriate, you will be advised of any other information / documents that the County Council needs to receive before payment is made. Organisations awarded Local Communities Funding must comply with the County Council's **acknowledging funding and publicity** procedure as published on www.nottscc.gov.uk/LCF.

Payment

Organisations awarded funding will be provided with information about getting set up to receive the grant payment.

Revenue grant awards up to £5,000 will be paid in one instalment.

Capital grant awards will be paid in two instalments: 75% when the agreement is signed and the due diligence is satisfactory, and the final 25% when the project is complete and satisfactory monitoring submitted (see below: 'Monitoring and completion of projects').

Monitoring and completion of projects

Monitoring helps to demonstrate that the grant has been spent as agreed by Elected Members.

Organisations in receipt of **Revenue** funding will be asked to complete an annual monitoring report.

Organisations in receipt of **Capital** funding will be asked to upload the following to their grant account:

- **Invoices and/or receipts** to confirm the total cost of the project and how the funding has been spent. Organisations must also confirm whether they are able to claim back any VAT.
- **A photo (or video clip) of the Capital asset 'in-situ'**.

Organisations in receipt of Revenue or Capital funding may be asked to provide additional information, e.g. updates on how the project is progressing, or to assist with reporting, audit or other requirements.

The County Council may also arrange to visit the funded project.

Organisations should raise any issues or concerns and advise the County Council of any planned changes at the earliest opportunity.

Appendix 1: Good Governance Checklist

What do we mean by governance?

Governance is about the way your organisation is set up and run. You can use the checklist below as a starting point to help review the governance arrangements for your organisation:

Item	Question	Yes / No
Governing documents *A governing document is a set of rules or agreement for your organisation / group.* *Note that there are different arrangements in place for Parish and Town Councils.*	**Is the governing document the correct type for your organisation? e.g.** • A Constitution (or 'Rules') for unincorporated associations. • A Small Charity Constitution (for organisations that do not meet the financial threshold for registering with the Charity Commission). • A CIO Foundation or Association Constitution for CIOs. • Articles of Association (for charitable companies). • Trust Deed for Trusts.	
	Does your governing document include appropriate, up-to-date information? For example, does it include: • What the organisation is set up to do? (objects) • How the organisation will do those things? (powers) • Who will run it? (trustees) • What happens if changes to the administrative arrangements need to be made? (amendment provision) • What happens if the organisation wishes to wind up? (dissolution provision) • How the trustees will run the organisation. • Initial arrangements for meetings, voting and financial procedures etc. • Trustee details • Is it signed and dated?	
	Is the proposed project permitted by the governing document for your organisation?	
Trustees & management teams	• Is the information provided to the Charity Commission, Companies House and/or any other regulatory body correct / up-to-date? • Are your trustees and management team supportive of the proposed project and application for funding?	
Policies and procedures *E.g. policies and procedures regarding safeguarding children & young people, vulnerable adults, health and safety, equality and diversity, recruitment and selection and volunteering.*	**Do you have relevant policies and procedures in place?** You may find it helpful to List the policies and procedures that you do have and identify any gaps.	
	• Are all your policies and procedures up-to-date and in-line with good practice?	
	• Are all your policies and procedures used in practice?	
Quality Standards & Accreditation of professionals employed (e.g. contractors, manufacturers, accountants, architects etc.)	Does your organisation – (and where appropriate, the professionals that you employ), have the correct and up-to-date accreditation, qualifications, and registration for the work carried out? Do the people / organisations that you employ have appropriate policies, procedures, and insurance in place? Sports clubs – has your Club achieved or are they working towards Clubmark?	

If your group would like further information / guidance about good governance arrangements, please have a look at the Councils' 'Support, Advice and Networking for Voluntary and Community Groups' webpage.

Please note: This Good Governance checklist is intended to provide *introductory, general guidance* and contains information based on research at the time of publication. This checklist is <u>not</u> a substitute for specific governance / legal / financial or other professional advice.

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Appendix 2: Eligibility criteria and what can't the funding be used for?

To be eligible to apply, the organisation or project must:

- Be an eligible organisation type / structure.
- Have in place the relevant governance – e.g. governing document, health and safety and safeguarding polices and procedures, as appropriate to the organisation / project.
- Benefit Nottinghamshire residents / communities.
- Only apply for up to 50% of the project costs up to the maximum award for the Fund, i.e. up to £5,000 for Revenue and up to £20,000 for Capital.
- Have at least 50% confirmed match funding.
- Have sufficient confirmed funding in place to deliver / complete the described project (including the amount you are applying for from the LCF).
- Have the support of a County Councillor (note that County Councillor support is not a guarantee of application success).

Also, for Capital applications, the project must:

- Benefit the community for at least 3 years.
- Have all relevant permissions in place.

Please note that grants awarded from the Local Communities Fund <u>cannot</u> be used as a full or partial contribution to the following:

- Assets / purchases / projects not recognised or not in line with the Organisation's governing document
- Costs that are incurred <u>before</u> the application is approved by Elected Members. Therefore, if the application is successful, applicants are advised to wait until their funding agreement has been signed by both parties and payment received before starting the project / purchasing the asset
- Projects that are <u>not</u> delivered within the Nottinghamshire County administrative boundary.
- Projects that do not primarily benefit Nottinghamshire County residents
- Costs associated with pre-schools or children's nurseries
- Projects that are for the sole purpose of promoting political or religious views
- Unspecified expenditure – e.g. 'miscellaneous' costs
- Funds to specifically build up a reserve or surplus
- General appeals or endowment funds
- Costs that have not been agreed with the County Council.

Note that: any funding awarded must be used as stated in the funding agreement.

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Appendix 3: Assessment Considerations and Process

Before applying, organisations should check that their proposed projects meet the criteria.

All applications will be reviewed by the County Council against the funding criteria.

Please note that:

- The County Council will carry out relevant checks on the information provided.
- Elected Members make the decisions regarding funding awards. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible after completion of the decision-making process - this could be approximately 8 weeks after the closing date.
- The funding is limited, and competition is likely to be strong, therefore the County Council may also take into consideration previous funding awards. Priority will be given to applications that best meet the criteria and organisations that did not receive an award in the previous funding year.
- If your application is successful, the County Council may not necessarily award the full amount requested. For example:
  - If the project can be delivered at a lower cost than the amount of funding requested
  - If some costs are not eligible for funding (e.g. on-going maintenance costs are not eligible for Capital funding)
  - High competition for funding.
- Local Communities Funding is discretionary and therefore subject to the availability of finances as determined in the Council's annual budget review.
- In exceptional circumstances, some projects with less than 50% match funding may also be considered at the Council's discretion.

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Appendix 4: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **Can our organisation apply for more than one project?**

   If your organisation would like to apply more than one project / asset, you should complete a separate application form for each project.

2. **Can I apply as a partnership and separately?**

   If an organisation is part of a partnership application, then it should <u>not</u> also apply as an independent organisation for funding to deliver the same project / asset.

3. **We're a branch of a larger umbrella / national organisation – can we apply?**

   As a national charity (or local branch thereof) you would need to demonstrate that the funding is being spent solely in Nottinghamshire and/or for the benefit of the residents of Nottinghamshire.

4. **Our application was 'approved 'in principle' – what does this mean?**

   If your application for funding is approved 'in principle', the organisation will need to follow the process as advised by the County Council and provide further information / documents / assurances as requested before the funding is released.

5. **We would like to query why our application was not successful – how do we do this?**

   All applications that are not successful will be provided with a summary of the reason(s) why the application was not successful. Common reasons why applications are not successful include:

   - There is not enough additional funding to cover the remaining cost of the project
   - The project does not address an unmet need
   - Additional funding already meets or exceeds the cost of the project
   - The application did not have support from the relevant County Councillor
   - Most beneficiaries are not Nottinghamshire residents
   - The Organisation type is not eligible for this Fund
   - The project does not contribute to the Council priorities
   - The project is part of commissioned services or duplication of mainstream / other services
   - The timeframe of the project is not in line with the guidelines for this Fund
   - The application was incomplete / under-developed.

If you cannot find the answer to your question in this document, or on the Council's webpage www.nottscc.gov.uk/LCF, please email the Communities Team at: communities.team@nottscc.gov.uk

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