

## **Investing in Communities Fund (ICF) – 2023-26**

Investing in Communities is a three-year fund that will be delivered over the period from the 1st April 2023 to the 31st March 2026. The ICF is a revenue fund, also with availability of a small amount of capital funding of up to £20,000 per application for small scale capital costs, where this is directly linked to the revenue project. Successful applications will be expected to commence activity on or as soon as possible after the 1st April 2023, and no later than the 30th September 2023.

### **Who is eligible:**

- Incorporated organisations those with registration with a regulatory body such as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) with the Office of the Scottish Charity
  - Charity based in Scotland that is also either registered with Companies House as a company limited by guarantee or regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA).
  - Community Benefit Societies regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.
  - Community Interest Companies that meet the Regulator of Community Interest Companies' community interest test and asset lock provisions.
  - Community Councils with an agreed Scheme of Establishment with the Local Authority and a written constitution.
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- All eligible applicant organisations must also have a registered office in the UK with an official operating base in Scotland that is rooted in the community or communities they serve, and which operate on a not-for-profit basis for the benefit of the community.

### **Eligible applicant organisations must also:**

- Openly involve and engage with all sections of their community or communities, consistent with the National Standards for Community Engagement.
  - Have a governing body, such as a board or management committee, and a governing document that has been formally adopted.
  - Meaningfully involve local people and community representatives in their decision-making structures.
  - In addition, they must be solvent, hold a UK bank account, with annual accounts that have been approved by their management committee or board, or current projected annual accounts, and control over all project income and expenditure.
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- If forming a partnership application, all parties involved need to be fully sighted on the application. If you don't have one, it may be helpful to develop a partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding so that all partners understand their role and what is expected of them. Whilst this will not be a requirement of the funding application it may help to avoid any issues later on
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- **Please note applications will not be accepted that are prepared or submitted by a third party on the applicant's behalf or projects or services that are managed by a third party on the applicant organisation's behalf.**

## **Overview**

The fund supports the revenue costs associated with community consultations, feasibility work, and the design and/or delivery of local community-identified and community-led projects and services that will address local challenges, priorities and needs. Possible examples might include:

- Providing holistic person-centred services and access to resources supporting low income households and families, child poverty priority family groups and individuals such as affordable/flexible childcare, income maximisation/financial capability, dignified food provision, and health and wellbeing support;
- Supporting people towards employment and better economic prospects;
- Participatory budgeting (PB);
- The fund will also consider requests to support a programme of phased activity during the ICF grant funding period - for example, some initial feasibility work to inform the most effective way to deliver a new local service. Where this is the case a single application form should be submitted addressing all phases of the proposal. However, you should note that funding for future phases of work will be dependent on the outcome(s) of the feasibility study;
- Small-scale capital costs up to a maximum of £20,000 per application, where these capital costs are directly related to the wider project/service delivery which is the main focus of the proposal. Where applicable, we will need written confirmation that appropriate permissions and consents are in place to carry out any capital works (for example, building warrant or planning permission).
- In delivering an eligible project we will ask you to tell us about the ways in which the project and/or your organisation can contribute to climate change ambitions and a just transition to net zero. This may include considering how your organisation operates, the space or resources you use, how the project will be delivered, how people access your services, and/or opportunities to promote climate conscious behaviours (for example by promoting active travel).

**Amount:**

- **The maximum you can apply for in total over the three consecutive financial years is £350,000.** This amount includes a maximum of up to £20,000 per application for small-scale capital costs, but only where this is directly linked to the main ICF revenue project or service. Examples might include capital works to help 3 reconfigure an asset or facility owned or managed by the applicant organisation from which the project or service will be delivered. Where applicable, we will need written confirmation that appropriate permissions and consents are in place to carry out any capital works (for example, building warrant or planning permission).
- **If applying for less than 3 consecutive years' funding, the maximum you can apply for in a single financial year is £150,000. The minimum annual amount you can apply for is £5,000 - for example, to undertake a feasibility study.**
- As a three-year fund, we are expecting that most, if not all ICF funding applications will be requesting grant to support their projects and services over the three full consecutive financial years.
- All applicants need to be realistic and reasonable about the amount of ICF grant they request.

**Aims and objectives of the fund:**

ICF will contribute to the delivery of various national outcomes as set out in Scotland's national performance framework. It will do so by supporting community anchor organisations based in the places they serve to deliver projects and services in our least advantaged and most fragile communities across Scotland, with a focus on four areas for action:

**1. Tackling poverty and inequality - including child poverty** - working towards ensuring fewer people experience poverty and inequality; together with improved life chances and opportunities; and also living healthier lives. Your application should also evidence how it will support people in a holistic person-centred way to help address the multiple and complex challenges of disadvantage that people can often experience.

**2. Developing and sustaining place-based approaches**, ensuring that communities are more resilient, equal and working in partnership to achieve shared ambitions for their place. This means that no-one is left behind, by including and involving all sections of the community in an inclusive way; and, by also working collaboratively with local statutory bodies and other organisations. By doing so, this demonstrates an understanding of the local community, its needs, and its connection to other services and priorities.

**3. Encouraging community-led regeneration** by enabling local people to identify for themselves the challenges and priorities for their areas, and importantly to also make decisions on what local solutions are needed. By strengthening the role and offering of locally-controlled community organisations, communities also become more sustainable - by empowering local people, and building on the skills and resources within that community.

**4. Ensuring a just transition to net zero**, where communities are:

- More climate aware,
- better equipped to support behaviour change, and,
- are able to contribute positively to taking action on climate change.

Whilst net zero refers to a state in which the greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are balanced by removal out of the atmosphere, transition is how we get to a net zero and climate resilient economy in a way that delivers fairness and tackles inequality and injustice. For example, by providing skills-training and education to help secure good, high value jobs in green industries like lowcarbon manufacturing, renewables, and technology.

**Your application must identify how your proposal will seek to meet all four areas of action.**

Projects supported by the ICF will contribute to a broad range of Scottish Government policies that work to deliver the National Outcomes set out in our [National Performance Framework | National Performance Framework](#)

Successful projects will deliver activity that reflects the following strategic areas of priority and core principles:

- [Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022](#)
- [Climate change plan 2018-2032 - update](#)
- [Place Principle](#)
- [The Regeneration Strategy](#)
- [Public Health Scotland's Strategic Plan 2020 to 2023](#)

### **Application form:**

- Application forms must be submitted by an eligible applicant organisation.
- The application form is not available yet as the fund has not opened however details of the some of the questions and character/word limits can be found at [Investing in Communities Fund: application questions - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Community/Investing-in-Communities/Fund-application-questions)
- As part of the application, you will be required to submit a project budget template detailing the project costs, the amount and sources of all match funding – including details of whether this is confirmed or not – and, the total annual ICF grant being requested. Project proposals can request 100% ICF grant to cover all eligible project

### **Timeline:**

- We anticipate that the fund will open for applications in **April 2022**.
- As an open challenge fund, we are anticipating considerable interest in this funding opportunity.
- **We are expecting the fund to remain open for approximately 4 weeks, and we would recommend that you submit your application as soon as you are able to do so after the fund opens.**
- One of the reasons for providing this pre-launch information now is therefore to give **eligible applicant organisations additional time to develop strong collaborative proposals that fit well with the aims and objectives of the fund.**
- Assessment of all eligible applications is expected to commence in May 2022. Thereafter, an independent panel - comprising of representatives from stakeholder organisations that are expected to include national community sector organisations with knowledge in community development - will come together to consider funding recommendations. This is currently expected to take place during October or November 2022.

Further details are available: [Empowering Communities Programme - Community empowerment - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Community/Investing-in-Communities/Fund-application-questions)