A logo for a community

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Viking Community Fund

Strategic Fund Application Guidelines

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1 Introduction

The Strategic Fund was established following a Shetland-wide community consultation to identify community priorities for funding from the Viking Community Fund.

Applications should be made online through the SCBF website - <https://www.scbf.org.uk/funding/vcf/strategic>

To give your application the best chance of success, please provide as much information about your project as possible. Incomplete applications will be returned. You will also be asked to provide supporting information such as your governing document and annual accounts.

The fund is open to individual communities in Shetland, areas of Shetland or for projects supporting Shetland-wide initiatives.

2 Who can apply

* Community groups or organisations which need funding to support projects or activities consistent with the purposes of the strategic fund may apply for a grant.
* You don’t need to be a registered charity to apply, but your organisation must have a constitution (governing document or set of rules) and be set up on a not-for-profit basis. If you are unsure if your group is eligible, contact us for advice.
* Businesses are also eligible to apply for support, however, this will be restricted to training and apprenticeships within areas which meet the strategic priorities for funding.

Projects which are the exclusive responsibility of Statutory bodies are not eligible for the apply.

3 What are the strategic priorities for the fund

Community-focussed activities which ‘sustain and develop Shetland’s communities’ and meet one or more of the strategic priorities of the fund:

* More younger people wanting to stay and/or come back to Shetland.
* Better transport links within and between communities.
* Better broadband and/or mobile phone connections.
* Reduced cost of living in Shetland.
* Improved housing supply and affordability.
* Preservation and enhancement of Shetland's natural environment.

Requests to support projects must evidence how they will achieve the priorities of the Viking Community Fund as detailed in the [2024-29 A Lasting Legacy for Shetland Business Plan](https://scbf.org.uk/businessplan/).

4 What can grants be used for

Grants can be used for a variety of project costs which meet the strategic priorities of the fund, these include

* Feasibility studies
* Equipment purchases
* Project staffing costs

SCBF are a ‘project funder’ and would not be looking to support an organisations ongoing core running costs, however, in exceptional circumstances SCBF will consider short-term assistance of core costs to support during a period of organisational transition.

5 Are there any activities the fund is unable to support

* Projects primarily benefiting residents outside Shetland.
* The advancement of religion or party politics.
* Activities that are generally understood to be the exclusive responsibility of a statutory authority.
* Activities contrary to the interests of VEWF or its affiliates.
* Activities likely to bring VEWF or its subsidiaries into disrepute.
* The costs of energy consumption.
* Anti-renewable energy/wind farm activities.
* Trips abroad unless for educational purposes.
* General fundraising appeals or activities
* Retrospective funding (i.e. paying for costs incurred before a decision on an application to the Fund for support can be made).
* Individuals or businesses for their direct gain

6 How much can I apply for

You can apply for funding of £10,000 upwards. Applications over £50,000 must in the first instance be discussed with SCBF. Please give yourself a minimum of 4 weeks before the fund closing date to discuss projects over £50,000 with SCBF.

7 How are decisions made

SCBF administration carry out due diligence on all applications, score them against a scoring matrix and create an appraisal document. The SCBF Funding Panel, made up of directors from the SCBF board, will review the appraisal, determine which projects should receive support and allocate funding.

8 When are decisions made

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Deadlines** | **Awards Made** |
| 31st October | Mid December |
| 31st January | Mid March |
| 30th April | Mid June |
| 31st July | Mid September |

* Eligible applications received after the deadline will be deferred until the next round.
* You can only apply for one grant per year. If successful, you can reapply again 12 months from the date of your previous grant offer letter.

9 When must grants be spent by

All awardees must be able to meet grant conditions. Grants should be spent within 12 months of grant award. However, any project delays should be communicated to SCBF and a grant extension may be agreed.

10 What happens when the project is finished

At the end of the project, we will ask you to complete and submit a final evaluation report on the project and its outcomes. This must be accompanied by evidence of grant spend.

11 SCBF Contact details

If you have any queries, please contact Eleanor Gear, SCBF Fund Manager

Tel: 07538417175

Email: [Eleanor.gear@scbf.org.uk](mailto:Eleanor.gear@scbf.org.uk)

Appendix A – Online application process

About the online application process

* You will be asked to create a user account on our website prior to completing an online application.
* The user account will be personal to you and you will be able to submit applications for multiple organisations from a single login account.
* Your application will automatically save as you progress through it.

General Guidelines

* Please complete all relevant sections. You will be unable to move through the online application where a mandatory field hasn’t been completed.
* In order to give your application the best chance of success, please provide as much information as possible for each section but be concise so as not to lose the essence of what your project is about.
* Please don’t write ‘see attached’ on any part of the form as a substitute for information – although if you wish to include other documents (besides your constitution and accounts) with which to support and supplement your application then you are welcome to do so. These can be added at the end by uploading ‘additional supporting documents’.
* Please round figures up to the nearest pound.
* If your project is time specific, then please make sure your application is made in plenty of time to receive a decision before the project takes place.
* SCBF is a Living Wage Friendly Funder; therefore, we would expect any roles paid for through a grant to meet or exceed the Living Wage. If it does not, then we can work with you to find a solution to this. Please see the Living Wage website <http://www.livingwage.org.uk/friendly-funders>.

Contact Details and Governing Document

* Make sure the main contact is someone who is familiar with both the workings of the organisation and the grant application, as this person may be contacted for a short telephone interview. Please make sure they will be available in the six weeks following the next deadline and let us know if they are away for any time during this period.
* We can only consider applications from constituted groups. The name of your group should be the name written on your constitution (or governing document). You must send us a copy of your signed constitution with your application.
* Your type of organisation will be the legal status of your organisation e.g., a company limited by guarantee, a charity etc
* You don’t have to be a registered charity, but if you are, please supply the Charity Number.

Documents to upload

We will ask you to upload the following documents during the application process, please ensure you have them to hand:

* A copy of the group’s constitution
* A copy of the group’s bank statement from within the last six months
* A copy of the group’s most recent approved annual accounts
* A copy of your project budget (or you can enter text in the cost breakdown section in the application form)
* Copies of quotes for works or goods included in the project budget
* A copy of the organisation’s Child Protection/Vulnerable Adult Policy (if applicable)
* Letters of support for your project (if applicable)
* Any other documents which you think are required in support of your application
* For example, any architects drawings, a business plan, and/or copies of any relevant permissions, such as planning permission, building warrant and/or listed building consent

Financial Information

* A copy of your most recent annual accounts must be included with your application. They should be signed be a member of your management committee. We will be unable to process your application if you do not send these or if your accounts are out of date.
* Groups who have not yet completed one full year must contact SCBF prior to applying.
* Please tell us what the difference was in your last year’s accounts between the money coming in and going out (your surplus or deficit).
* Please also tell us about any unrestricted reserves you have and tell us if these cannot be used for the project you are applying for help with. (Unrestricted reserves are general funds held by the organisation, as opposed to restricted reserves which will have been provided by a funder or donor only for a particular purpose or project.)
* Please note that ‘account name’ should give the exact name in which your account is held. We expect this to be the same as the name of your group (as shown on your constitution) and if it isn’t we may not be able to give you a grant. We cannot deposit money to bank accounts in the name of an individual.
* We expect groups to require at least two unrelated people to authorise cheques/transactions from their account. If this is not the case, we may not be able to award you a grant.

About the project

* Please describe the project you are applying for support for
* What do you want to do?
* How will you do this?
* Where will the project take place/what areas of Shetland will benefit?
* Who will lead the project? Their role(s), skills, experience.
* Which of the strategic fund priorities will this project meet and how?
* Describe the impact this project would make and the outcomes you intend to achieve.
* How does this provide evidence of value for money?
* Have you sourced multiple quotes for any purchases/refurbishments?
* How many people are expected to benefit from the project? Only include those who will benefit directly from the project. This may include any volunteers involved in delivering it. Please ensure the number you give is realistic.
* Describe the community involvement in the project
* How have they shown a need for this project now and in the future?
* How have they been engaged in the development of the project?
* How will they be involved in the delivery/implementation of the project?
* Describe the impact this project would make and the intended outcomes.
* How will you monitor and evaluate the success of the project?
* How will you maintain/sustain your project after the period of funding is finished? Will your project leave a lasting legacy?
* If the project will continue beyond the period for which you are seeking grant funding, please let us know how you intend to continue it, including how you will secure any funding, volunteers, or other resources needed to do so.
* Please also include relevant details if the project will help to make your organisation more self-sustaining.
* Is this a new project? If your project is already running, how has it been funded to date?
* Does your project require any permits or planning permission? If so, are these in place? (please provide evidence)

Project costs

* What is the total cost of the project and how much grant funding are you requesting from the VCF Strategic Fund?
* Attach or enter a fell cost breakdown for the project detailing which elements the fund would be supporting.
* Describe how you have sourced best value, i.e. multiple quotes
* If your total project cost requires other funding (including where your organisation is contributing its own funds), you will be asked to list all of the other funding sources, including the amounts being applied for and whether this funding is confirmed.

What happens next?

* You will receive a confirmation email that your application has been received by SCBF. In some cases, we’ll contact you by phone or email to ask for any additional information needed, sometimes this isn’t necessary. It’s important that you will be available during the six weeks following the deadline. If you will be unavailable for any time during that period, please include a note to that effect attached to the application, as your application may not be considered if we can’t contact you. including the amounts being applied for and whether this funding is confirmed.
* You’ll be notified of the Panel’s decision in writing by the dates stated above.
* One-off grants must be spent within one year of award. Multiyear grant awards will be required to provide monitoring reports of their projects which detail evidence of successful outputs in order to release funding for the following year.