

**ESF Community Grants 5**

**Electronic Application Guidance**



***‘When completing the Electronic application form – the form cannot be saved throughout completion. Therefore you must answer every question fully in one session before submission. It is strongly advised that you download the template paper version to enable you to cut and paste the written narrative answers onto the electronic form’.***

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# About the Community Grant

## What are ESF Community Grants?

ESF Community Grants are part of the European Social Fund (ESF) programme which is distributing

£2,000,000 in small grants in the Humber, York and North Yorkshire region between April 2019 and July 2021. The aim of the fund is to help unemployed people progress toward employment through access to learning opportunities.

Funded activities must be aimed at unemployed individuals aged **18 and over** from the hardest to reach communities. The identified priority groups for our region are as follows:

* + - Disadvantaged geographical areas
		- People with disabilities and health conditions
		- Lone parents
		- People aged 50 and over
		- People from ethnic minorities
		- Females

However, applications will be considered from any community that can evidence disadvantaged people, for example homeless people and ex-offenders.

## How much can you apply for?

Grants of between £5,000 and £20,000 are available. Successful groups will have an opportunity to access support to further develop and strengthen their organisation.

The funding for the project must be for the full programme cost and not matched to any other funding source. An organisation can re-apply, but there is a maximum of £20, 000 per organisation in any 12 month period.

## Who can apply?

Small charities or not-for-profit community organisations based in and providing services in the Humber, East Riding and York, North Yorkshire area that:

* + - employ less than 20 full time employees (or full time equivalents based on 30 hours); and
		- have an annual turnover of £1,000,000 or less, for three consecutive years, and are not in direct receipt of direct funding from the European Social Fund (ESF), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

## What kind of activities will Community Grants fund?

Any activity that will help an individual’s progress towards employment and improve employability skills will be considered: examples include:

* + - Help with basic skills
		- Taster work experience including voluntary work
		- Training, advice and counselling (including money management)
		- Job search assistance
		- Confidence building and personal development
		- First contact and engagement activities

## What items can Community Grants fund?

We can fund any **revenue** costs relating to the learning activity and **capital** expenditure up to

£1,000

Examples of the revenue costs we can fund include:

* + - Staff costs, including administration (plus on costs)
		- Tutor fees including freelance tutors
		- Beneficiary costs, for example travel and childcare
		- Rent and room hire
		- Accreditation
		- Stationary, postage and learner resources

## What Community Grants cannot fund

We can only fund Information, Advice and Guidance if it is delivered by an accredited Matrix provider or the equivalent. If your organisation is not accredited, IAG can be sub-contracted to another provider.

Community Grants activities must not duplicate provision already funded through existing Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), Department for Work & (DWP) mainstream provision or ESF Co-financing.

Community grants cannot be used for capital purchases i.e. purchase of equipment or property

£1,000 or over.

Refurbished/second hand items, hiring/leasing of equipment/vehicles

# Application process

1. Applications will first be assessed to ensure the application has been fully completed. **This is the sifting stage.**
2. Only eligible applications that pass the sifting stage will be scored. Some questions are weighted and carry a higher score than others. Any application scoring less than 50% will not be considered.
3. An offer in principle will be sent to potential successful applicants, supplementary documentation will be requested to be supplied. Final decisions will be made subject to the moderation process. (usually within a 4 week period)
4. Unsuccessful applicants will be told why they were not successful and offered feedback.

# Requirements for successful applicants

All successful applicants will be required to;

* 1. **To ensure your organisation has sufficient guarantees to implement the updated European General Data Protection Requirement (GDPR), HLC require you to complete 8 questions and sign a GDPR Processor Agreement prior to contracting.**
	2. Attend mandatory training which will comprise of a contract compliance workshop, RARPA and a financial claim process session.
	3. Sign a contract agreeing to the terms and conditions of the grant.
	4. Sign a Health and Safety declaration.
	5. For organisations who submitted policies that do not meet minimum standards for this grant, grant awards will be conditional upon updating documentation as requested.
	6. Complete necessary learner forms: Start Individual Learner Record (ILR), Completion Individual Learner Record, **Confirmation of Progression paperwork**, learner evaluations and case studies.
	7. Securely submit original participant (learner) paperwork and retain copies in line with HLC’s retention of documentation policy for your records and for audit purposes.
	8. Complete two monitoring forms. This will be at the interim and final stages. (Financial claims)
	9. Securely send copies of expenditure, for example; invoices, receipts, payroll information and timesheets and retain originals for your records and audit purposes. Money will **only** be paid where eligible expenditure can be proven.
	10. Ensure beneficiaries have access to relevant information, advice and guidance, linking or signposting to other provision where applicable.
	11. Display a European Social Fund (ESF) and Anti Fraud poster and ensure all learners are aware that the programme is co-financed by the European Social Fund.

# Payment structure of grant monies

Grant monies will be paid in a number of instalments depending on the time span of the project.

* **40%** of the total grant awarded will be paid into the organisation’s bank account once HLC has received satisfactory confirmation that the project has been set up, the project is ready to commence and the contract and declaration forms have been signed and presented at the mandatory compliance workshop.
* **30%** of the total grant awarded will be paid upon receipt of an interim monitoring report, necessary learner forms and 50% of the contracted learners have been registered onto the programme and the first payment has been spent, evidenced and approved.
* **30%** of the total grant awarded will be paid once the final monitoring report has been submitted, along with completed and approved financial evidence; outcomes information, evaluation and case studies. Learner paperwork with sufficient engagement completed. (Financial claim may be reduced if profiled target learner numbers are not achieved).

Payment of interim and final instalments will be delayed or cancelled where it is found recipients are not adhering to the terms and conditions of the contract. **Where it is found that activity has not taken place, or activity delivered is different to the activity proposed in the application process, HLC reserves the right to claw back payments of all grant monies paid in full.**

The target number of beneficiaries and engagement should be viewed as a minimum expectation. If it becomes apparent that this will not be achieved, grant recipients must notify HLC/YCL immediately. The contract and amount of grant awarded may then be reviewed at this point.

# Electronic Application Form guidance

## Application form overview

The below table provides an overview of the **ESF Community Grants** application form, including the weighting of each question and any maximum word limits. This is included to help you plan the completion of your application form. More detailed guidance is provided below for each question.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Question** | **Word Limit** | **Value** |  |
| **1** | Organisation Details |  |  | Info only |
| **2** | Bank Details |  |  | Info only |
| **3** | Due Diligence |  |  | Must be fully completed & signed by a director/trustee\* |
| **4** | Eligibility |  |  | Check all boxes |
| **5** | Main activities | 250 |  | Information only, must be in line with ethos of funding |
| **6** | Track record | 500 | 10 | Must include CG4 grant info if applicable |
| **7** | Priority groups |  |  | At least one group must be ticked |
| **8** | Evidence of need | 500 | 10 | Describe specific barriers of priority group |
| **9** | Recruitment and Eligibility | 500 | 10 | Eligibility of participants must be addressed \* |
| **10** | Project summary | 1000 | **30** | Full delivery of project information required 33% of overall score available \* |
| **10a** | Project Contingency  | 400 |  | Info Only |
| **11** | Progression |  |  | Number of progressions required \* |
| **12** | Project Management | 500 | 10 | Clear processes and procedures required |
| **13** | Detailed Budget breakdown |  |  | Clear itemised breakdown required \* |
| **14** | Financial Monitoring | 400 | 10 | Clear financial processes and procedures required |
| **15** | Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Prevent | 300 | 5 | Clear implementation process  |
| **16** | Equality & Diversity and Sustainable Development | 300 | 5 | Clear implementation process |
| **17** | GDPR | 250 |  | Clear implementation process |
| **18** | Insurances |  |  | Tick to confirm |
| **19** | Declaration |  |  |  1 electronic signature required |
| **20** | **Sifting Checklist** |  |  |  All boxes to be ticked and up to date supporting evidence if requested |
|  | **Total** |  | **90** |

***\* Please note,*** *if you do not fully complete all the questions your application* ***will not be scored.***

## Application form – Detailed guidance

**1. Organisation Details**

Enter the organisation details and provide contact information for the main contact for the project. We will need this information to contact you with a decision or if we have any queries with your application. Please provide the legal status of your organisation and the company and/or charity number as appropriate. This should support the fact that your organisation is in the voluntary sector. You should also give your annual turnover for the last three years and number of full time equivalent staff, evidencing your eligibility for the fund (turnover under £1,000,000 and less than 20 full time equivalent staff). Please provide details of the three largest funders for your organisation and the annual grants/contracts you receive from them. (Include previous Community Grants if applicable).

**2. Bank details**

All applicants must be able to demonstrate that their organisation has a bank account in its own name which has two appropriate account signatories. The bank account details provided in this section will be used to make ESF Community Grants payments if your application is successful. As part of this question, you must ensure that you have attached a copy of a recent bank statement as part of the supplementary evidence (20j) showing the account name, number and sort code.

**3. Due Diligence**

All directors/trustees must be identified in this section – checks will be made to validate persons named to ensure clear and transparent information is supplied to the best of your knowledge. Failure to disclose vital information may involve a discretionary exclusion from award if it is found that a director/trustee has been attached to an organisation who has been involved in a receivership or insolvency in the last 3 years. If irregularities are highlighted during the contract period claw back may be implemented. **Must be electronically signed by a Director/Trustee.**

**4. Eligibility**

Eligibility for the grant operates as a Threshold question. This means that if your organisation does not check all the boxes to confirm eligibility, your application will not pass the sifting stage and will not be scored.

If you have any doubt about your organisation’s eligibility, please contact us before submitting an application as any inaccuracies or omissions on this form could result in your organisation having to repay the grant in full, even if learning activities have taken place, in the event of a grant being awarded.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Eligibility criteria** | **Specific information/guidance** |
| 4a | The organisation is part of the voluntary and community/not-for- profit sector | This includes charities, social enterprises, not-for profit companies and community groups |
| 4b | The organisation has an independent bank account that the grant can be paid into | Details of this account should be included in Section 2 and a copy of a recent bank statement **must** be included with your application |
| 4c | During the last full year of operations, the organisation’s turnover was less than £1,000,000 | This will be cross-referenced with Question 1 where you have provided the annual turnover of your organisation |
| 4d | The organisation has fewer than 20 full-time equivalent staff (FTE =30 hrs)  | This will be cross-referenced with Question 1 where you have given the number of FTEs in your organisation |
| 4e | The organisation has not received funding **directly** from European Social Fund (ESF), Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), or Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in the last 12 months | This relates to direct funding from one of the stated agencies, not funding via a sub-contracting arrangement. If you have any doubt about your eligibility, please contact us to discuss your eligibility |
| 4f | The organisation has not received an ESF Community Grant 5 within the last 12 months | Organisations can receive a maximum of £20,000 ESF Community Grants 5 funding in any 12 month period. If you have received a Community Grant 5 in the past, the date on the offer letter must be at least 12 months ago. You may still be eligible if the previous grant and new application does not exceed £20,000 in total. |
| 4g | If successful, this grant will not be used as match funding or to fund activities funded elsewhere | As ESF Community Grants has already been match- funded, it cannot be used for this purpose |
| 4h | The organisation will ensure that all project beneficiaries are eligible | You must confirm that you will check the eligibility of project beneficiaries, this means they must not be employed, be over the age of 18 years old and they must have the right to work in the UK |
| 4i | The organisation has a signed & dated governing document | The signed and dated document must be included with your application and demonstrate eligibility under 4a |
| 4j | The organisation has policies relating to Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding (including the Prevent Duty, Health and Safety and GDPR | These policies must be included as part of your application. There is a policy checking tool attached as Appendix A which will be used to assess your policies, please use this to ensure your policies meet the minimum requirements for this fund |
| 4k | The organisation has employers/ public liability insurances as legally required | You must show evidence of your insurances if required OR a letter of assurances if required before delivery commences |
| 4l | The organisation has audited **or** independently examined accounts or an independent financial referee | You must include a copy of your most recent accounts and the turnover must match the amount stated in question 1. **OR** If you have been operating for less than 12 months and do not have a set of accounts, you should include the details of an independent referee as a separate enclosure with your application |

**5. Main activities**

This should be the mission statement or core activities of your group/organization which fall in line with the ethos of the funding. Though the specific aims of this project do not need to be the primary aim of your group, you must indicate how this project adds value to or complements the other aims. Also outline the main beneficiaries of the services your organisation provides.

**6. Track record (10 points)**

This is your opportunity to outline any previous experience you have of delivering similar projects. In this section, you should give details of the previous project, including the number of people that benefitted, the activities undertaken and any outcomes achieved by the project. Where the project involved the achievement of targets, please state the number of people you were contracted to work with, as well as the number you actually achieved, including how many went into either work or further education.

If you have delivered on **ESF Community Grants** in a previous programme. You **must** include this project within your answer. Include information about any **lessons** you have learned from your previous grant and anything you would do differently if you were successful again. You **MUST** include detail of meeting performance relating to your ESF grant, which includes meeting targeted learner numbers alongside successfully spending and evidencing the grant amount awarded. If this was not met, detail of **why** must be provided.

Your responses should include your ability/capacity for delivering remote/online activities.

You must also include evidence to demonstrate delivery of activity met the needs of your priority groups.

If you are a new organisation and/or have no similar relevant delivery track record , please explain how you intend to deliver your project with evidence to support your response, e.g. this could include your staff skills and previous experience, activity plans and processes you have developed to enable you to identify the need for the project.

**7. Priority groups**

In this section you must tick at least **one** of the target groups for the project. No target group will be scored higher than others, but you will be asked to explain how you will meet the needs of the groups you have ticked as part of question 8. If none of the other boxes apply or you have additional target groups, tick **other** and give the details. NB: ***Under each section you have chosen please state the pproposed number of participants for each priority group selected. Particoants may fall in more than one priority group.***

**8. Evidence of need (10 Points)**

 In line with the priority groups you have selected in question 7, clearly describe the barriers including digital ability/capability which may prevent each of the target groups from moving towards employment and or further learning/education. Explain how your activity is going to help them to tackle these difficulties and achieve their aims. Strong answers will show a clear understanding of the specific issues which are faced by your target groups and well-planned solutions to overcome these.

Explain why this activity is needed and back up with statistics or feedback, for example:

* Feedback or views from the individual you intend to recruit or have recruited in the past
* Statistics or evidence from a recent study, eg deprivation in your target community
* Anecdotal evidence from your organisations own experience, such as requests from learners for this type of learning activity, details of waiting lists etc
* Evidence of certain **skills shortages** which match your suggested provision

**9. Recruitment & Eligibility (10 points)**

 How will your programme promote and market activities to participants **utilizing online/virtual platforms** ie social media.

You need to include specific detail of your recruitment process ie. time you spend marketing, promotional materials you plan to use – subject to approval from HLC/YCL (leaflets, website, social media etc. all publicity must include current correct ESF logos – if unsure please ask). You also need to tell us how and from where your learners will be recruited, this may be from advertising or direct referrals from other agencies.

You need to demonstrate how you will ensure the right participants are recruited onto the project. You should tell us about the process you will use to check that the learners are eligible for ESF Community Grants (unemployed/inactive, 18+, legal residency). Provide a description of how you will assess that your provision fits the needs of the individual and that the programme is right for them (**good initial assessment process).**

**10. Project summary (30 points)**

A realistic start date should be entered within 2 months of the application deadline. The project end date is when you will have to complete your final monitoring form and financial claim requirements. You may want to allow time at the end of learning activity to complete this (2 weeks).

This is your opportunity to explain your project and you should include information about what your project aims to achieve. How it will support beneficiaries and the main activities that will take place. Provide a detailed plan of your proposed project, including the length of overall activity, number of sessions, guided contact/support hours, the method of delivery and how you will support beneficiaries to a positive outcome.

* How the program is structured? Length x guided contact hours x subject area
* What are the aims of the provision on offer?
* Type of activity and delivery and teaching methods (including typical length of participation/contact time)
* **How will the project deliver blended learning**
* What difference or change will your project bring about to the participant?
* What additional support is provided to enable participants to achieve the proposed aims
* How will the project retain beneficiaries to achieve your contracted progression outputs/result
* Explain how you will work in partnership with other agencies and employers to enable the project to achieve its contracted progression routes*.*

**10a. Project Contingency (30 points)**

**Under the current circumstances due to the Covid – 19 situation, please describe contingency plans to enable the delivery of your Community Grants project to continue if restrictions are implemented.**

* Working from home strategies
* Remote working resources
* Online learning resources
* Financial capacity - Adjustment of budgets to accommodate changes required
* Adaptation of learning/office environment to ensure the safety of all

**11. Progressions**

***Output/result number is required as part of the application process.*** Please indicate how many of your beneficiaries will progress into employment or further learning/education. *(minimum into employment* ***17%****, further education/learning* ***16%****)*

***(Progression output/result must be achieved within 28 days of the participants completion of the ESF funded activity)***

**12. Project Management (10 points)**

Describe how your organisation will manage performance to achieve your contracted targets.

* This section is to document what project performance systems are used. You will need to explain what processes your organisation has in place to ensure high quality learning activities are delivered i.e. staff/tutor experience and/or qualifications, Continual Professional Development (CPD).
* Explain what your assessment processes are for improving and developing your organisation (what quality standards do you work towards ie OFSTED, PQASSO).
* Describe how you will manage administrative processes to ensure correct and error free evidence is submitted to HLC/YCL to meet the ESF requirements.

**13. Detailed budget breakdown**

Provide a detailed breakdown of your expenditure for this project, provide as much detail as possible and clearly show how you have worked your expenditure out. The section has been split into the 4 sub- headings, Employee costs, Freelance Costs, Other Costs and Capital Purchases.

* **Employees (staff budget)** – these are the costs for any staff who are employed by your organisation and receive a salary/wage. A salary toolkit will be supplied which will enable you to generate an approved hourly rate (this will be set throughout the project unless otherwise agreed changes made by HLC).
* **Freelance costs** are for people who will deliver and/or administer the project who invoice your organisation and are not an employee (eg freelance tutors) **please note:** the maximum hourly rate for freelance is £35.
* **Other costs** this may include venue hire, accreditation costs, stationery, learner resources, marketing, volunteer’s and participant expenses
* **Capital purchases** are for one-off equipment costs that would be added to your fixed asset register and depreciated overtime. This could include laptops, printers, PC’s, recording equipment etc. If you have included capital purchases in your budget, you **must** collect **2** relevant quotes for **each** item applied for.
* *NB: overall amount applied for must not exceed £1000 in total. Items purchased must be applicable to the project activities, to be purchased at commencement of the project. (Refurbished/second hand items are ineligible)*

**14. Financial monitoring (10 points)**

In this section you will need to provide details of how your organisation will ensure that all monies received from the grant will be evidenced during the lifetime of your project. Describe your financial processes and controls your organisation has or will put in place to track spend effectively. Consideration must be made to the types of expenditure as specified in the budget breakdown. *(including petty cash and proof of* ***cleared payments*** *identified on your bank statements within the contract period). Please ensure payment amounts match the invoice/payment.*

**15. Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Prevent (5 points)**

Your organisation is required to have up to date policies in place, you should also explain how you have embedded both H&S, Safeguarding and Prevent into all stages within your project. This question prompts you to thoroughly examine your own arrangements in order to ensure project activities are delivered in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. **Describe any risks within your project and how you will manage these including Covid-19 recommendations.**

In this section you should give details of where the project activity will take place (please note if delivery will take place in more than one venue give details of each). You should also include how you will assess potential risks to beneficiaries and explain what measures you will put in place to minimise the impact of any risks identified. Ensure you indicate the designated people responsible for the roles.

**16. Equality & Diversity and Sustainable Development (5 points)**

Your organisation/group’s policies you should explain how you have embedded both E&D and SD at all stages within your project. Describe the resources, skills and experience of staff in both areas.

 **17. GDPR**

#### Your organisations GDPR policy, should provide detail of how GDPR will be integrated within your project at all stages. Detail of how you will capture, process and store learner and staff information should be considered within your answer. Community Grants requires organisations to process hard copy information, consideration should be given to how hard copy information is stored. If your organisation does not have access to lockable cupboards, you may wish to include this within your budget breakdown for the project.

**18. Insurances**

All organisations/groups applying for this must hold Employers Liability/Public Liability insurance if required.

Please state the value of cover. If your organisation does not have current insurance cover in place. A letter of assurance from a referee will be required to be submitted as part of the supplementary documentation prior to the commencement of delivery your project.

**All insurance must be in the name of the organisation applying for the grant.**

**19. Declaration**

Please read the declaration statements and sign and date in the box provided.

**Signature must be that of the applicant.**

**20. Checklist**

The checklist has been included as a tool for you to check your application. Please complete the checklist to confirm the documents to be submitted as supplementary documentation if required for moderation. Please note that if you have failed to meet any of the checklist requirements, **your application will not be scored.**

## And final Reminder:

**Please remember you cannot save the application throughout the completion, so utilise the downloadable template copy to cut and paste the narrative answers. If supplementary documentation is requested, we recommend that you use registered or recorded delivery if posting. There will also be a facility made available to upload the supplementary data if you are able to do so.**

1. **Contact information**

Organisations requiring further support or guidance should contact the appropriate regional partner below in the first instance:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Humber and East Riding**  | www.hlc-vol.org |
| **Jacquie Newman**01482 327438jacquie.newman@hlc-vol.org |  |
| **York and North Yorkshire** | www.yourconsortium.org |
| **Hannah Prole**01423 795306hprole@yourconsortium.org |  |

# Policy checking tool

**Guidance for the minimum requirements of organisational policies**

**Appendix A**

|  |
| --- |
| **Health and Safety Policy** |
| **Section** | **Specific guidance on what to check** | **** | **Notes** |
| Statement | Should set out the commitment to managing health and safety effectively |  |  |
| Responsibilities | Should set out who is responsible for specific actions and identify who has overall responsibility for Health and Safety |  |  |
| Arrangements | Set out as a minimum, risk assessments, RIDDOR, first aiders, fire safety, training, resolution and planning and control |  |  |
| References | Should refer to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) |  |  |
| Effective Dates | Ensure that an effective from date is present and signed off and ensure review date has not passed |  |  |
| **Safeguarding Policy** |
| **Section** | **Specific guidance on what to check** | **** | **Notes** |
| Statement | Should set out the commitment to ensuring safety of vulnerable adults including the **Prevent Duty** |  |  |
| Responsibilities | Should set out the responsibilities of key staff and identify the Designated Person with overall responsibility for safeguarding |  |  |
| Arrangements | Set out as a minimum, , responding, training, record keeping and link to relevant Local Safeguarding Board |  |  |
| Definitions | Should provide a definition of “vulnerable adult” and definitions of different types of “abuse” |  |  |
| References | Should include details of Local Safeguarding Board, with attention to **The Care Act 2014** |  |  |
| Effective Dates | Ensure that an effective from date is present and signed off and ensure review date has not passed |  |  |
| **Equality and Diversity Policy** |
| **Section** | **Specific guidance on what to check** | **** | **Notes** |
| Statement | Should set out the commitment to ensuring fairness and equality of opportunity |  |  |
| Responsibilities | Should set out responsibilities for key staff including the person responsible for implementation of the policy |  |  |
| Arrangements | Set out as a minimum, recruitment and selection, training, promotion and treatment of all staff |  |  |
| Definitions | Define “protected groups” and “types of discrimination” |  |  |
| References | Should refer to the Equality Act 2010 |  |  |
| Effective Dates | Ensure that an effective from date is present and signed off and ensure review date has not passed |  |  |
| **GDPR**  |
| **Section** | **Specific guidance on what to check** | **** | **Notes** |
| Statement | Should set out the commitment to ensuring the integration of GDPR |  |  |
| Responsibilities | Should set out responsibilities for key staff including the person responsible for implementation of the policy |  |  |
| Arrangements | Set out as a minimum escalation for data breaches AND registering with the ICO |  |  |
| References | Should refer to the GDPR regulations 2018 |  |  |
| Effective Dates | Ensure that an effective from date is present and signed off and ensure review date has not passed |  |  |

***Please note,*** *this represent the* ***minimum requirements*** *and should not be seen as an exhaustive list*