

# Small Grants Programme



**SPORT  
ENGLAND**

Creating sporting opportunities in every community

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## Welcome to the Sport England Small Grants Programme

Sport England invests funds received from both the National Lottery and the Government to support the development and delivery of grassroots sporting opportunities in England.

The Small Grants Programme is designed to help local communities increase access to sport or to improve the experience of people playing sport.

This guide will give you answers to important questions such as:

- Who can apply?
- What we will and what we won't fund?
- How to apply for funding?
- What makes a good application?

In addition to this guidance, we can also offer help through:

- Our website: [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)
- Our advice line: 08458 508 508
- Email: [funding@sportengland.org](mailto:funding@sportengland.org)

We update our information from time to time so if you are using this guide after the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009, you should check our website for the most up to date version.

## Where do I start?

The first thing to decide is whether or not the Small Grants Programme is the right programme for you. If you answer yes to all of the following questions, you should read on as the Small Grants Programme may well be able to offer your organisation funding:

- Are you a voluntary or community organisation, a not for profit company, school or local authority that has a charitable dissolution clause?
- Do you need between £300 and £10,000 to help develop sporting opportunities in your community?
- Are you and your beneficiaries based in England?
- Do you have a UK-based bank account in the name of the organisation (or for schools, in the name of the local authority) that requires at least two unrelated signatories?
- Are you clear about what difference our funding will make?
- Can you send us your application two months before your project is due to start?

If you have said “no” to any of these questions, it is likely that any application you submit will be unsuccessful. For more information about other potential grants available please visit [www.lotteryfunding.org.uk](http://www.lotteryfunding.org.uk) or phone 08452750000.

## Who can apply?

The programme is open to any legitimate not-for-profit club or association, statutory body or educational establishment.

We will not fund individuals, or organisations established to make a profit and distribute that profit to members.

Examples of organisations that can apply:

- Voluntary or community organisations (e.g. registered charities, formally constituted not-for-profit sports clubs, community interest groups, companies limited by guarantee and not having share capital). All eligible organisations must have dissolution or winding up clause that specifies that any remaining assets must not be distributed to members but shall be donated to an organisation with other similarly charitable objectives.
- A school (we will not fund activities or services that the school has a statutory responsibility to provide {i.e. events during the school day)
- A parish, town, city or county council
- A health body such as a primary care trust, NHS Hospital Trusts, Foundation Hospitals.

Examples of organisations that cannot apply:

- An individual, sole trader or partnership
- Organisations established to make profit
- Organisations not established in the UK.

We are unlikely to fund organisations that cannot demonstrate they are appropriately run (i.e. there must be at least three unrelated members on the governing committee, membership must be open to all sections of the community and your constitution should highlight appropriate governance controls). We are also unlikely to fund organisations that are in poor financial health or those that have had a previous grant from us that has not been managed satisfactorily.

If your organisation is a branch of a larger organisation, you should confirm that you are sufficiently independent of them. If you have your own constitution, bank account and produce your own accounts then you will be able to apply in your own right. If not, you will need the support of your parent organisation, which must accept overall responsibility for the award.

## What will we fund?

- You can apply for between £300 and £10,000. This can be a contribution to a larger project but we would not usually expect to contribute to projects costing more than £50,000.
- Projects should be new or additional activity for your organisation that provides added value to your existing services.
- You should be able to deliver the project within 12 months and be able to provide a monitoring report within 13 months of the date of the offer letter.
- Projects must seek to increase participation in sport, sustain participation in sport or provide opportunities for people to excel at a chosen sport.
- Sporting outcomes must be the main focus of the project. Applications for projects using sport as a means to an end are acceptable, but there must be a clear sporting benefit.
- Projects must be focused only on sports currently recognised by Sport England and must be delivered to beneficiaries based in England.

Examples of items we can fund include:

- Non-personal sports equipment purchase or hire (that is, equipment that is not used just by one person. Examples of eligible equipment would include team kits, portable nets/hoops)
- Coaching costs or other sessional workers
- Training staff or volunteers
- Transport costs
- Venue hire
- VAT that you cannot recover
- Volunteer expenses.

## What won't we fund?

- Projects that have already started or where your organisation has committed to expenditure
- Repeat or regular events (for example, an annual summer coaching event) although we may consider funding additional costs to make the event larger and to increase the participation
- Your organisation's existing running costs (for example, heating and lighting costs, rent, ground or equipment maintenance etc)
- Fundraising activities
- Items that primarily benefit individuals (for example, equipment that is not shared. We will fund team kits and shared equipment)
- Construction or refurbishment of buildings, changes to land or land use (for example drainage) or the purchase of fixed equipment (for example, floodlights or permanent cricket/football nets. We can, however, fund portable equipment)
- Loans, endowments or interest payments
- Ongoing staff costs or salaries except coaching costs or fixed term positions needed to meet a specific project requirement. Coaching costs must clearly be additional to your organisation's usual expenditure.



- Used road vehicles (there are additional health and safety concerns with older vehicles and higher running costs. Applications for new road vehicles must clearly demonstrate good value for money and we are very unlikely to fund cars for this reason)
- More than £10,000 to the same organisation in any single year period, from the date of our award letter
- Projects that do not support Sport England's strategic outcomes or that do not have a direct impact on sports participation (for example, we are unlikely to fund the development of websites unless there is a clear plan as to how this will increase or sustain participation)
- Sponsorship or projects that will distribute our funding to other organisations
- Projects for sports that are not recognised by Sport England
- Activities that the state has a legal obligation to provide
- Contingency costs
- VAT that you can recover

## How to apply?

If you have read this guide and think that your organisation is eligible to apply for funding and your project is within our funding policy then you should follow these next steps:

- Go to our website and visit the Investment Centre <https://enquiry.sportengland.org/applicationportal/Login/ApplicationLogin.aspx>
- Enter your username and password if you have one or create one if not
- Work through the application form, reading the support notes as you go along. You will need to make it clear what our funding will be used for, what difference your project will make and why your project is needed
- Save your work as you progress (you may wish to save your answers elsewhere and paste them into the application form as you proceed)
- Submit your application along with any documents required. Where possible, these should be uploaded with your application. If you post your documents to us, we will not begin to assess your bid until we have received them.

When we have received your complete application, we will begin our assessment, which should take no more than six weeks.

You should seek to provide as much information as necessary within your application. If we need to contact you for more information, this may delay the decision. If your application contains insufficient information for us to be able to assess your bid properly, we are likely to reject your application. You should provide a clear explanation of your budget so we can see how your project has been costed.

## What makes a good application?

We can only fund projects that clearly help us deliver our strategic aims. To ensure we can do this, we need all the relevant information. We have to base our decision about whether to fund your project entirely on the information that you provide so it is important that you provide all the essential documents listed in the next section.

Please also consider the following points when completing your application form:

- **Your Organisation.** We need to know that your organisation is financially healthy and well organised. This will help us to be confident that you will be capable of delivering your proposed project. Please ensure that we have sufficient information about:
  - The legal status of your organisation
  - Your organisation's financial position
  - How your organisation is run (e.g. details of management committees, financial controls etc).
- **Your Project.** We can only fund projects that demonstrably contribute to one, two or all of our strategic aims of GROW, SUSTAIN and EXCEL. Please remember to describe clearly how your project will meet these aims. We also need to be confident that the project has been well thought out and planned. Therefore, if you can provide a suitable project delivery plan, it would assist our assessment of your application. A simple description of key milestones and targets is sufficient.

- **The Need for Your Project.** We are keen to support projects that meet the needs of your community. Therefore, it is important to explain why the project is necessary in terms of the district where it will be delivered.  
For example, will your project contribute to the aims of the sport's governing body, or will it help to meet the sporting targets of your local authority? Similarly, if you can demonstrate that there are already people waiting to take part in your project, this is likely to be of benefit to your application. Consultation with potential beneficiaries is always worthwhile and we recommend that you provide information on any consultation that you have done.
- **Who will benefit.** Please be clear about how many people will benefit from your project, and what each person will get from the project. For example: '100 young people aged 16-19 will each receive 10 hours of coaching'. This information will help us to make a sound judgment about value for money.
- **Your Project Costs.** We need to know what our grants will be spent on and that we will be getting good value for money. Therefore, if you can provide full details about what you intend to spend the money on, it will help us to make a decision. For capital items over £5k we would expect you to show that you have fully researched the cost by providing copies of three quotes.

## What do I need to send Sport England?

If you are a statutory body, county sports partnership or national governing body, all you need to send is your application form along with any project delivery plan you may wish to include. For all other organisations you will need to send:

- Your application form
- Your organisation's constitution/governing document/set of rules
- Your organisation's most recent annual accounts (these should be compliant with the relevant regulatory body (for example, for registered charities or companies these should meet the charity commission or companies house rules). These should be signed and dated by your chair, secretary or treasurer and by your auditor/independent examiner where appropriate
- Your organisation's last three bank statements (please send copies only – not originals).

For new organisations we will require an income and expenditure projection and evidence that your organisation has established a bank account.

## Your referee

Unless your organisation is a statutory organisation, a county sports partnership or national governing body, we will need details about a referee for your project.

We may contact your referee as part of the assessment process. We will also seek confirmation from the referee for all successful applications and will ask them to complete and sign a brief form. We may also ask your referee to complete a short report about your project when it has finished.

Your referee should be independent of your organisation but should be able to verify the information you have provided in your application form. They should be someone with a professional or public position we can check (for example, your local MP, local councillor, a solicitor, senior bank official, a local authority officer, a social/youth worker, a voluntary sector development agency officer).

Your referee must not be someone who benefits from our grant, nor related to anyone who will benefit. They must not be (or have been in the last two years) a member, trustee or staff member, nor related to anyone in these positions.

## If your application is successful

If we decide to award a grant for your project, we will send you an award letter that will detail how much we are awarding and what the money should be used for. Enclosed with the letter will be the standard terms and conditions of grant which you should ensure you understand before accepting the offer. You must accept our offer within four weeks of it being made, using the form enclosed with the letter.

You must also ask your referee to complete the declaration form and ask your bank to complete the BACS form.

You can start your project as soon as you receive the award letter but we will not pay for any items where expenditure is shown to have been incurred before the award was made.

You must keep all receipts and invoices throughout the project as we will require these at the end of project as part of the monitoring. You must complete your project within 12 months of the date of the offer and submit your monitoring information to us within 13 months (the required form is enclosed in your award letter).

We may visit or phone to check how our grant has been spent, so you must keep all evidence in relation to the delivery of your project.

You can hold more than one grant but we will only fund your organisation for up to £10,000 in any 12-month period under this programme. You can, however, apply to other Sport England programmes although you will need to demonstrate your ability to manage and deliver multiple projects.

## If your application is unsuccessful

All applications are treated on their own merits but we may have more fundable bids than we have available money to award. If we do not award your bid we will write to you to tell you the reasons why. We will state whether your project has the potential to be funded and what you need to do to improve your chances of success. If your project falls outside our funding policy, we will not encourage you to re-apply.



## Other information and help

We aim to be efficient and responsive to our customers' needs. If you are not happy with the level of service you have received, we would like to hear from you. Contact us on 08458 508 508 or e-mail us at [funding@sportengland.org](mailto:funding@sportengland.org) .

We receive many applications that we cannot fund for a number of different reasons. You may be disappointed if your application is not awarded a grant but you can only lodge an appeal against this decision if you think we have misinterpreted the information you have provided or you think we have not followed our published procedure. However, if you are not clear why we have rejected your application contact us on the number above.

There are a number of places your organisation can go to for support and assistance. Your local county sports partnership or the national governing body for your sport will be able to help guide your project and may provide endorsement for your project. Your local authority, Council for Voluntary Service or similar voluntary sector support body may also be able to assist you with completing the application form if required and access to the internet should be available at any local library. If you are unsure how to find your nearest source of assistance or support then call us on 08458 508 508.

### Useful websites

- National Association for Voluntary and Community Action - (NAVCA) website at: [www.navca.org.uk/liodir](http://www.navca.org.uk/liodir)
- Direct Gov website at: [www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/Localcouncils](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/Localcouncils)
- Running Sports website: <http://www.runningsports.org/aboutus/index.htm>

## Businesses that offer help

Some businesses promote their services by telling potential customers about Sport England funding programmes. They may offer consultancy services or imply that they are acting on our behalf. They might even offer to help you fill in the form if you pay them a fee or deposit. There are some good consultancies available that may provide a useful service in helping an organisation consider planning issues but our application process is free and has been designed in such a way to minimise the need for any paid assistance. Only the sources listed above are endorsed by Sport England and we do not act with or endorse the services of any supplier or consultant and will not pay any costs, commission or fees that they may charge you to make an application.

## Help with governing documents

A governing document sets out in writing what an organisation is established for and how it operates. It may be called a number of things, such as a constitution, set of rules or trust deed. We need to be sure that the organisations we fund are set up properly and are able to manage a grant. Considering an organisation's governing document is one way we do this. Schools, health bodies and town or parish councils are statutory bodies so we do not need to see their governing documents. However, we need to check other organisations' governing documents to make sure we can fund them. We cannot award a grant to an organisation that is not clearly eligible to hold one. So if you are a new voluntary or community group, or have not applied to us before, we recommend you think about whether you may need some help and advice on writing your governing document before you apply. Your national governing body or county sports partnership should be able to help with this or you can call our advice line on 08458 508 508.

## Data protection

We will use the information you give us on the application form and supporting documents during assessment and for the life of any grant we award you to administer and analyse grants and for our own research. We may give copies of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications, when monitoring grants and evaluating the way our funding programmes work and the effect they have. These organisations may include accountants, external evaluators and other organisations or groups involved in delivering the project. We may also share information with other lottery distributors, government departments and other organisations and individuals with a legitimate interest in lottery applications and grants, or for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may use the data you provide for our own research. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.

## Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 gives members of the public the right to request any information that we hold. This includes information received from third parties, such as, although not limited to, grant applicants, grant holders, contractors and people making a complaint. If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act we will release it, subject to exemptions, though we may consult with you first. If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release, you should let us know when you apply.



## FUNDING HELPLINE

If you require further information or help please feel free to contact us on our funding helpline on 08458 508 508.

Alternatively email us at [funding@sportengland.org](mailto:funding@sportengland.org)

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