

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2023-24

Application Guidance

Thank you for your interest in applying to this Fund.

The following guidance will provide some background to Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and help you to complete the application form. If you are in any doubt please don't hesitate to seek advice by emailing UKGovFunding@scotborders.gov.uk or telephoning 01835-826661.

Background to the Fund

The aim of the UK Government SPF is to support the levelling up of all parts of the UK. Its purpose is to boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards as well as improve public services, restore sense of community and empower communities. More information on Shared Prosperity Fund can be found at [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus)

Local Authorities across the UK were given the task of planning and delivering the Fund's varying interventions within the following 3 investment priorities of:-

- **Communities & Place** – this can cover activities which support/improve community assets/infrastructure; improve the natural environment/green open space; support sports/arts/cultural/heritage; active travel enhancements/small scale transport projects; impactful volunteering or feasibility.
- **Supporting Local Business** - activities which support development and promotion of the visitor economy; investing in infrastructure/site development; strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems; expert business advice and support programmes; business support/economic growth or feasibility can be supported.
- **People & Skills** - this could cover activities which provide employment support of economically inactive people; enrichment & volunteering activities; increased levels of digital inclusion/essential digital skills or provide green skills courses.

Local Authorities have discretion to deliver SPF through direct award, open grant funding, commissioning, procurement of service provision or in-house provision.

Scottish Borders Council submitted its investment plan for consideration in August 2022. In December 2022, UK Government confirmed Scottish Borders was awarded just over £5m to invest over 3 years from 2022-2025.

Eligibility

1. *Is your activity based in Scottish Borders?*

The allocation awarded is for the Scottish Borders area – if your activity is to cover an area outwith the Scottish Borders catchment you will not be able to acquire funding from this source.

2. *Does your project meet the investment strand?*

If your activity does not support the investment strand then this Fund is not for you. If you are unsure as to whether your activity fits, please contact the External Funding Team for advice.

3. *Will you be able to complete your activities by end February 2025?*

All work must be completed no later than end February 2025 with final claims sent for payment in the following 2 weeks. Please only apply for funding for activities you are confident you can deliver within this timescale.

4. *Is your activity ready to start if you are awarded funding?*

Due to the limited timescale for delivery, your activity requires to have all necessary planning consents, statutory requirements and match funding in place at the time of application.

5. *Are you set up appropriately?*

In order to apply you need to be properly set up (ie. a community organisation with its own Constitution or set of rules, registered charity or company, social enterprise or small business). If you have any queries regarding eligibility please contact the External Funding Team.

6. *How much funding are you looking for?*

The purpose of the SPF Fund is to support activities which assist with the taking forward of local strategies or development of activities which can support people into employment, economic or community growth in the area. We are looking to fund projects in the £20,000+ request range.

Application Form Guidance

The application form is made up of 5 sections:-

1. Organisational Details
2. Activity Details
3. Expenditure Details
4. Risk Assessment
5. Authorisation

Application Form – Questions

Section 1 – Organisational Details

As the same suggests, here we ask for your organisation's name, registration details and contact information. If you are unable to complete any of the questions in this section, please contact the External Funding Team for advice.

Section 2 – Activity Details

Here we ask for basic details such as project name, start and finish dates etc. Please bear in mind that if you are awarded funding your activity should be ready to start (ie. all Planning Consents, statutory requirements and match-funding in place).

- (a) Tell us which SPF investment strand you wish to apply for. 'Community & Place' is already indicated for you.
- (b) Tell us about your activity and what you will use the funding for.
- (c) As you will be applying for funding along with many others and competition could be strong, it is important you tell us what how your project will support development/delivery of the South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy. (ie. this could be in relation to development of skills, testing of business ideas, creating jobs, improving tourism, improving our towns and countryside, protecting our planet in the way services and infrastructure is delivered/created etc). Attached is the link to the strategy [Regional Economic Strategy - South of Scotland Regional Economic Partnership \(dumgal.gov.uk\)](https://dumgal.gov.uk)
- (d) We also want to know how you have engaged with your local community and sought its support in the development of your activity. Please give us examples of how you have achieved this.
- (e) UK Government has provided a list of Outputs and Outcomes relative to each investment strand (attached is the list of UK Government Outputs/Outcomes you should refer to when completing the application). Please select only the Outputs and Outcomes you feel best applies to your project and which you think you will be able to provide both qualitative and quantitative information. Please quote from the list of Outputs/Outcomes highlighted yellow in the second column. Please give us an estimated figure you intend to measure success by.
- (f) It is important that you have assessed your activity to ensure it does not unfairly discriminate against certain sections of your community from taking part (ie. if it's a community garden/facility does it include level access for those physically impaired? If a learning activity have you considered how to alleviate language/cultural barrier problems etc). A link is provided to explain what is meant by the protected characteristics.

Section 3 – Activity Expenditure

Please provide a breakdown of your activity expenditure for the whole project, split this into Capital and Revenue expenditure. The totals of the capital and revenue columns should equal the Total column, as should the totals of the SPF Request and Match-Funding equal the Total column. Also provide us with an estimate of spend profile from the start to end of the activity. This should clearly demonstrate what specific project activities will be taking place in year 2024/25.

Section 4 – Risk Management

In looking to undertake the activity you should identify any potential risks to the activity and indicate how you propose to eradicate these should they happen (ie. case of flooding stops capital works, how will you propose to re-organise delivery to ensure the project still has potential to complete on time - member of the project team becomes unwell, how will you re-organise their workload to ensure the activity still progresses etc).

Section 5 – Authorisation

Finally, please ensure you sign off the application form – we can't progress with your application unless it has been signed off by a senior member of your organisation, this may be your Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer. If you run your own small business this can be signed off by yourself as Director.

Submitting the application form

To submit please just send in an email to UKGovFunding@scotborders.gov.uk with the subject title "Completed Application". Make sure you attach your supporting organisational documentation with the application.

Applications

Once you have submitted your application it will be assessed and put before the Place Partnership Advisory Panel for funding recommendation.

Assessment will include:-

- Fit with SPF priorities and South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy
- Evidence of community support/demand
- Deliverability/capacity
- Expected Outputs/Outcomes
- Risk and mitigations
- Organisational competence

Your application will require to be fully completed and submitted **by 5pm on XXX**, following which it will undergo the necessary due diligence and technical checks before being presented to the Panel for recommendation on funding.

If your project is recommended for funding by the Panel, it will be put forward for final decision by Director of Resilient Communities, Acting Chief Financial Officer, Economic Development Elected Members Group, Convener and Leader of Independent Group under delegated powers.

It is expected final decision will be known by XXXX.