**CashBack for Communities**April 2026 to March 2029

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This document includes questions raised and answers provided during information webinars and in response to direct enquiries, all in one place. We have edited content for brevity and clarity.

# Key information

## Deadlines

**Question:
Is there a date deadline to complete the Declaration to then get the Application Form?**

**Answer:**

There is no deadline to complete the Declaration to access the application form. It is an automated process, which will be open up to the final submission deadline of 12:00pm noon on 7 August 2025.

We encourage you to start the application process in good time to have your full application ready to submit before 31 July 2025. After this date, the Inspiring Scotland CashBack team cannot support with general enquiries.

Contact: CBEnquiries@InspiringScotland.org.uk

IT and technical application support will still be available until the final submission deadline.

Contact: Enquiries@InspiringScotland.org.uk

# Who can apply

## Meeting the Declaration standards

**Question:
We have slightly less than £200,000 most recent year income, can we still apply?**

**Answer:**

No. Organisations with an income below £200,000 in their most recent annual accounts are not eligible to apply.

**Question:**

**Our annual accounts aren’t yet ready and so we don’t have accounts less than 18 months old. Can we sign the declaration now?**

**Answer:**

No. We will check the Declaration statement and with no recent published accounts you would not pass the finance section – at this point. It is implicit in the Declaration that the statements you make can be verified, hence we will need to see recent published accounts.

There is no advantage to signing the Declaration early in the process to access the application form. All the application form questions, word counts etc. are contained in the guidance documents already available online.

## Partnerships

**Question:
Can you explain how eligibility works for projects that will be delivered in partnership?**

**Answer:**

Partnerships

As part of the changes to Phase 7 of Cashback for Communities programme we have streamlined the fund and simplified the application process. As a result, we will only look to fund partnerships that can demonstrate the following criteria.

For partnerships to be eligible they must demonstrate:

1) Partnership is the only way in which the outcomes can be achieved

2) Rationale for partnership is strategic and brings together the specific skills, knowledge and experience to address the issues at hand

3) A clear memorandum of understanding is in place to ensure all partners are clear about adherence to minimum standards, grant conditions, financial accountability and can fulfil all the programme evaluation requirements.

We would expect that the structure of the partnership is set out clearly in the application, with responsibilities articulated and an explanation of how the project would be maintained should one or more partners not perform as expected.

We will not consider partnership applications that do not fulfil the criteria above or where partnership is being proposed as a vehicle to get around eligibility criteria or minimum standards.

Partnerships cannot be used as a means for organisations of an ineligible type (for example, Local Authorities) to access CashBack for Communities funding. Local Authorities and ALEOs, educational establishments like schools, colleges and universities, and other organisations of an ineligible type should not receive CashBack for Communities funding as delivery partners. Applicants can still work collaboratively with such organisations, for example through nomination routes for children and young people, or as delivery sites (for which payment can be made).

Collaboration as an alternative to formal partnership

CashBack projects are encouraged to collaborate with other organisations and community groups, this will continue into the next Phase of the CashBack for Communities programme. If you plan to work with another organisation, this would not exclude that organisation from applying for funding separately. However, organisations should avoid being delivery partners in multiple applications under different lead partners, or in addition to being a lead partner in another application. The Phase 7 assessment process seeks to avoid, and will discard, the same or similar partnership projects being submitted under different lead partners.

If your organisation is eligible for this phase of funding, but also works in partnership with a statutory service, this does not make you ineligible. However, CashBack for Communities funding must be used to provide additional activity and not substitute any statutory responsibility or provision.

## Umbrella/consortium organisations

**Question:
Can consortium members apply to CashBack for Communities as well as the consortium parent?**

**Answer:**

Yes. Umbrella organisations or consortium parents, in addition to their member organisations, can both apply for CashBack for Communities funding if each organisation meets the eligibility criteria in their own right. You should ensure that the projects do not overlap and are distinct.

## Local Authorities and ALEOs

**Question:
What does it mean to be an ALEO?**

**Answer:**

Local Authorities are not eligible applicants and this includes Local Authority subsidiaries known as Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs). For the purposes of the application process, we define an ALEO as an organisation that is fully consolidated in a Local Authority’s accounts. This means the Local Authority is recognising that it controls the ALEO’s financial and operational policies. If you are unsure whether your organisation falls within this definition of an ALEO, please consult your parent Local Authority’s most recent audited annual report.

# The types of projects we will fund

## Your participants

**Question:**
**Can you confirm the definition of being *at risk of becoming involved in antisocial behaviour, offending or reoffending*?**

**Answer:**

See the Scottish Government policies section on page 5 of the Guidance on How to Apply for further insight into the definition of being “at risk of becoming involved in antisocial behaviour, offending or reoffending”.

We encourage you to reference the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), and particularly the most deprived 20%, as well as protected characteristics to ensure your project design supports the children, young people and communities who need it most. We understand there may be exceptions to this focus and invite you to explain your chosen areas for delivery in Q16.

**Question:
Is it okay to focus on a specific age group within the 10-25 year olds? (16 plus for example)**

**Answer:**

Yes. You may apply to work with a focussed age group within the 10-25 years old range, for example 16 to 25 years old. See Q25 of the Guidance on How to Apply and application form.

## Delivery

**Question:
Can the funded activity take place during school hours and / or school premises if it is additional to the curriculum?**

**Answer:**

Yes. Delivery can take place within school hours and / or within school premises if there is a strong case to do so. You need to evidence that your project meets the needs of the children, young people and communities it is supporting, and that it is not a service that is funded within statutory provision.

**Question:
You mentioned prioritising cold spots or specific strategic work within the Universal strand. Is there information available on which areas have been identified for these priorities?**

**Answer:**

We encourage you to provide focussed responses in Q16 and Q19 as to *Why have you chosen these areas* and *How do you know that this project is needed* respectively. You should consider local priorities, including Community Planning and / or local Policing Plan priorities. Our decisions will be based on the strengths and alignment of these responses and existing strategies. You can find further information within the notes for both of these questions in the Guidance on How to Apply.

## Existing programmes

**Question:
Does the project need to be new and can funding be used to replicate or scale up existing projects?**

**Answer:**

A project does not need to be new and can be used to replicate or scale existing projects. However we suggest you pay close attention to the Guidance on How to Apply when completing your application to ensure it is aligned to the criteria for this funding phase. Trying to shape an established project to fit into the CashBack for Communities programme may result in a less favourable assessment than a bespoke approach.

If the existing project does clearly align with the criteria for this phase, we welcome an application. We encourage tried-and-tested approaches and you will need to demonstrate your track record in delivering similar projects. Note however that successful CashBack for Communities projects have to meet requirements around the profile, visibility and evaluation of the programme. In earlier phases, successful applicants have established distinct CashBack for Communities versions of projects to meet the specific requirements of the Fund.

## Funding

**Question:**

**What is the maximum a local organisation can apply for?**

**Answer:**

In the Universal A (local) strand our expectation is to look to fund organisations operating within a singular local authority up to a maximum of around £300,000. Flexibility past this maximum will be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided that a clear strategic rationale is demonstrated and application criteria are met in full.

## Match-funding

**Question:**

**Are there any expectations of match-funding being secured?**

**Answer:**

No. Match-funding is not a requirement nor is it expected. See response below on using CashBack for Communities funding to match-fund.

**Question:
Can CashBack for Communities be used to match-fund existing or planned projects?**

**Answer:**

Successful CashBack for Communities projects have to meet requirements around the profile, visibility and evaluation of the programme. An existing or planned project, separately funded, is unlikely to be able to meet these requirements. In earlier phases, successful applicants have established distinct CashBack for Communities versions of projects to meet the specific requirements of the Fund.

## Eligible expenditure

**Question:**

**Can we include the making of grants as part of our application?**

**Answer:**No. CashBack for Communities Grant Offer Letters do not include authority for onward grant-making.

**Question:**

**Can we include payments to participants?**

**Answer:**

No. Firstly, CashBack for Communities Grant Offers do not include authority for onward grant-making. Secondly, paying participants to work for the applicant, or any other organisation, is likely to be considered as using “CashBack funds for activities not directly supporting the grant purpose” and therefore ineligible.

Reimbursing participants for appropriate expenses (for example, travel to access project activity) is an eligible expense.

**Question:**

**Are profit-making activities allowed?**

**Answer:**

No. Applicants must have a not-for-profit status. Organisations able to distribute profits are not eligible.

If you are a Community Interest Company, to be eligible to apply you must be limited by guarantee (not shares) and be able to evidence an appropriate asset lock. CIC applicants should be aware that they will be assessed to the same standards as applicants with charitable status.

## Finance

**Question:**

**Can we submit micro company accounts?**

**Answer:**

Micro company accounts may not always provide sufficient evidence of appropriate controls and governance. We recommend that you provide full accounts if you have those available

# Strands

## Selection

**Question:
What happens if we select the wrong strand?**

**Answer:**

You will not be scored down for selecting a strand that does not match your project description. If we wish to progress your application, this can be amended during the assessment process, ahead of the application being scored and will be confirmed with you.

**Question:**

**My project seems to fit well in one strand but possibly has small elements of another strand. Are we still eligible?**

**Answer:**

Yes. Having elements of another strand would not make you ineligible but applicants need to ensure that there is a clear rationale for this. We recommend organisations submit focussed applications and avoid stretching delivery to multiple strands. You will not be scored more favourably per se by including additional strand delivery.

**Question:
How do I decide if my organisation should apply to the Local or National (A or B) strand of Universal delivery?**

**Answer:**

National delivery partners are defined as applicants who propose to deliver in at least three Local Authorities. An application to deliver in three or more Local Authorities will not be scored less favourably than an application to deliver in all 32 Local Authorities.

A charity with existing delivery in multiple local authorities is eligible to apply for Universal A (Local Delivery) strand, provided they have a local presence, track record and are proposing to meet a need that is not otherwise provided by local organisations. However, they would then be restricted to only deliver in two or less local authorities and could not also apply for the Universal B (National Delivery) strand.

Neither local nor national organisations will be looked on more or less favourably than the other. The purpose of splitting the Universal strand into to A and B is to ensure projects are compared against their peers in terms of reach and resource.

## Youth Work

**Question:
What are your expectations around Youth Work in the next funding phase?**

**Answer:**

Universal strands A and B have a focus on youth work, defined as “supporting young people in their own journeys by providing a safe space, trusted adults and appropriate support that builds confidence and skill sets”. Further links to relevant Scottish Government policies can be found *Section 4. The types of projects we will fund* of the guidance pack.

# Outcomes

## Evaluation

**Question:**

**What are the reporting or evaluation requirements for the CashBack for Communities outcomes?**

**Answer:**

Reporting requirements, including outcome indicators, will be agreed with successful applicants. See Q27 in the Guidance on How to Apply and application form. Your answer to this question will help shape the impact measures detailed in grant offers to successful applicants.

# Our assessment process

## Participation of Children and Young People

**Question:
What sort of language should I use? For example, will the assessment be undertaken by young people?**

**Answer:**

The decision-making process will involve young people. We suggest you answer all questions in plain English, but draw your attention to Q13A, which may be included in its original wording within assessment packs to panels and young people.

## Geographic distribution

**Questions:
How are the funds distributed across Scotland? Is there weighting towards Local Authority areas with higher recovered proceeds of crime?**

**Answer:**

During the assessment process, national and local coverage may be considered. There will not necessarily be even distribution of funding across Scotland, given the focus on supporting the 20% most deprived communities in Scotland according to their Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) level. We will not weight according to Local Authorities with higher proceeds of crime.