

Sunart Community Benefit Fund

Factsheet

Sunart Community Benefit Fund and who is it for?

This charitable fund is provided by Sunart Community Renewables and raised through the community hydro scheme. They donate money to the Sunart Community Company who place it directly into the Community Benefit Fund.

The Fund supports community projects benefiting those living in Sunart. The Fund's purpose and priorities have been informed by a process of ongoing community consultations which began with the CADISPA report in 2014.

How is the Fund managed, and who makes decisions about it?

The Community Benefit Fund is held and administered by a charity, the Sunart Community Company. The awarding of grants from the fund is managed by the Community Benefit Fund Panel comprised of 13 volunteer Sunart residents with local knowledge and interests.

How much is available?

The size of the fund will vary each year with the amount generated from the community hydro scheme. The Fund will be in place for the operating life of the hydro scheme which is expected to be over 20 years.

What sizes of grants are available?

The following sizes of grant are available for a range of activities that benefit the local community.

- **Grants: £500 - £5000**
- **Large grants: over £5,000**

Large grants require a two-stage application process. First of all, applications are invited via the short '**Large Grant Enquiry Form**' which is submitted to the Community Benefit Panel (this enquiry form may be submitted at any time of year, but the subsequent Application Form must be submitted before an advertised deadline. Please be aware of deadlines and submit enquiry forms well in advance). The administrator of the fund may seek some further information prior to the Panel discussing your enquiry. The Panel will then agree whether or not to invite a full application. The following large grant application form would normally be accompanied by a project plan or outline business plan. Due to this please be aware large applications will usually take longer to process.

What are the deadlines and timescales?

The fund will initially operate two funding rounds per year. The deadlines and timescales for the first grant awards are:

Closing date for applications	Panel decision date
February 1st	March
August 1st	September

Please note: The Large Grant Enquiry Form may be submitted at any time of year but the subsequent Application Form must be submitted before an advertised deadline. Please be aware of deadlines and submit enquiry forms well in advance.

What will the Fund be used for and what 'outcomes' are the Panel looking for?

The Fund will support positive change by investing in a wide range of inspirational, community-led activity that is strategic, positive and creative and helps create a legacy of lasting impact. The Fund will do this by making grants to support the costs of relevant projects, services and facilities.

There are four 'Areas for Action' that the Community Benefit Fund will seek to progress with its awards policy:

- **Health and Well-being**

- **Learning and Working**
- **Access and Transport**
- **Housing and infrastructure**

Underpinning these over-arching priorities, the Community Benefit Fund Panel must seek to work within the boundaries of its legal responsibilities, namely its charitable objects:

- To promote for the public benefit rural regeneration, following principles of sustainable development, where 'sustainable development' means development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, in areas of social and economic deprivation within the Community by all or any of the following means
- The relief of poverty in such ways as may be thought fit,
- The relief of unemployment in such ways as may be thought fit, including assistance to find employment,
- The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst unemployed people, and providing unemployed people with work experience,
- The creation of training and employment opportunities by the provision of workspace, buildings and/or land for use on favourable terms,
- The provision of housing for those who are in conditions of need and the improvement of housing in the public sector or in charitable ownership provided that such power shall not extend to relieving any local authorities or other bodies of a statutory duty to provide or improve housing,
- The advancement of environmental protection or improvement,
- The preservation of buildings or sites of historic or architectural importance,
- The provision or assistance in the provision of recreational facilities for the public at large and/or those who, by reasons of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, poverty or social and economic circumstances, have need of such facilities,
- The protection or conservation of the environment
- The provision of public health facilities and childcare.

What other criteria apply to the Fund?

As well as demonstrating a fit with at least one of the outcomes above, priority for grants can be given to projects that demonstrate the following additional criteria.

Beyond the 4 strategic priorities and the charitable objects, the Fund will also require applicants to consider the following issues in an appropriate and proportionate way relative to their project. It is recognised that they may not all be relevant. However, where they can be integrated into project planning/activity it is likely that the impact of investment from the Fund will be enhanced or increased, in keeping with the aspirations expressed in the Community Action Plan process of creating "***Keeping Sunart a great place to live, work and visit.***"

- ⌘ **Local procurement:** That local suppliers of goods and services will be used, where appropriate (e.g., in terms of quality of products / services available) and feasible (in terms of availability and cost). The definition of 'local' will vary depending on the goods/services in question. In some cases, it could be taken to mean within the Sunart Area but in others, Lochaber or Highland or the West of Scotland might be most appropriate.
- ⌘ **Partnership working:** Where appropriate, that the applicant has considered whether delivering their project in partnership with other organisations / groups will add value (financial, capability, or other). This could involve working with voluntary, private or public-sector bodies that operate at local, regional or national level.
- ⌘ **Building capacity locally:** That the applicant has considered if the project provides opportunities to build the skills and knowledge of group members or other local people connected with the project. This could be formal or informal and through some form of mentoring activity, peer support or buddying scheme and/or any other learning opportunity that could be created through the project.
- ⌘ **Leverage or match funding:** That the applicant is seeking to secure match funding for

the project (from local fundraising activity or other sources) and/or that the applicant can demonstrate what other funding may be secured as a result of implementing this particular project. The amount of volunteer time being invested in the project will be considered when awarding grants, but is not currently being considered as match funding.

- ⤴ **Sustainability:** For grants of over £5,000 the Panel may give additional weighting to an application that can show it has an element of financial sustainability and or an ability to generate income from other sources in the long term.

What is excluded from funding?

Awards cannot support the following types of activity:

- ⤴ The advancement of religion or politics (including requests to support the core activities of religious or political groups).
- ⤴ Activities which are deemed to be the responsibility of statutory authorities.
- ⤴ Grants to individuals, (with the exception of payments made to assist access to training or education, which may require evidence of spend and that the activity has been completed).
- ⤴ Projects benefiting primarily those residents out-with the area of benefit.
- ⤴ Anti-renewable energy activities.
- ⤴ The repayment of loans or payment of debts.

Costs already incurred or activities that will take place before we have made a decision on an application - known as retrospective funding. (This last rule may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances, but applicants must never spend in the expectation of support from the Community Benefit Fund.)

Who can apply for a grant?

To be eligible to apply for a grant, applicants are expected to:

- ⤴ Have a constitution (governing document or set of rules) and be set up on a not-for-profit basis. However, applicants do not need to be registered charities to apply. If you need support setting up a constitution you can contact the Sunart Community Company for assistance via izzy@sunartcommunitycompany.co.uk.
- ⤴ Provide latest set of accounts signed by an independent / third party or, if the group has been operating for less than one year, they should provide a cash-flow projection.

How can I apply?

There are separate forms for the two grant sizes. The Standard Grant application form, Large Grant Enquiry Form and Large Grant Application form are available to download at <https://sunartcc.wordpress.com/blog/> or <http://www.sunartcommunitycompany.co.uk/> or by email from the Fund Administrator izzy@sunartcommunitycompany.co.uk

Completed and signed applications should be submitted via:

Post: CGF Administrator, Craig Ard, 5 Longrigg Road, Strontian, Acharacle, PH36 4HY

Email: izzy@sunartcommunitycompany.co.uk

How many applications can I submit?

During the first three years groups may only apply for one grant per round. This is to try and ensure that in the initial three years there is a wide spread of grants to a diverse range of eligible organisations.

What if I have more questions?

For further advice or information on the Fund or to discuss your application, please contact the Programme Administrator- details above.