Appendix 3 – Guidance and Criteria for Large Grants

Midlothian Council Grant Scheme Guidance and Criteria 2022/25 for LARGE GRANTS

Applications are welcome from asset locked community groups, charities and social enterprises. To apply you must be constituted and have a bank account. If you are a new group, you will need a statement of purpose and a bank account in the name of the group.

All applications should demonstrate how they meet the priorities of the Single Midlothian Plan:
- Reduce inequalities in learning outcomes
- Reduce inequalities in health
- Reduce inequalities in economic circumstances
- Reduce Midlothian carbon emissions to net zero

The single Midlothian Plan is available online:
www.midlothian.gov.uk/downloads/download/89/single_midlothian_plan

Grant funding can be used for things like:
- Volunteer expenses
- Running costs
- Start-up costs for new projects
- Staff costs
- Buying equipment
- Feasibility studies

There are some activities that are not eligible for grant funding:
- Repairs of buildings
- Capital projects
- Paying for religious services or religious materials
- Being spent exclusively on consultancy fees
- Paying for material that is designed to support political activity or a political party

Financial governance

We acknowledge that having unrestricted reserves is recognised as good practice in order to cover contingencies, for example statutory redundancy payments, however if your organisation has very significant reserves in relation to annual turnover then we may need to discuss this with you further.

The grants cover the period 2022/25

Grant	Maximum annual award	Grants will be allocated
Large	£33,500	Every 3 years

Criteria for Large Grants

GRANT STREAM	EXAMPLE OUTCOMES
Reduce inequalities in learning outcomes	**Projects which support people and communities to:** **Improve qualification levels and participation in local learning opportunities for all ages** e.g. • individuals are supported to progress into employment and into better employment • individuals are supported to participate in lifelong learning opportunities including arts and cultural activities • people are supported into volunteering opportunities **Support the capacity of groups to** e.g. • offer lifelong learning opportunities for citizens of all ages • strengthen skills of individuals and groups to develop the work of their organisation/community group, including governance arrangements
Reduce inequalities in health	**Projects which support people to:** **Protect and improve their mental wellbeing** – e.g. • supporting them to build personal resilience, • supporting access to help • reducing stigma • increasing social connectedness **Stay as well as they can, this could be through preventing ill health or preventing a condition from getting worse** – e.g. • increasing movement and exercise • increasing healthy eating • reducing smoking, drinking and drug taking • increasing access to services **Address barriers to health that are caused by poverty** – e.g. • increasing digital inclusion • improving living conditions • improving the ways people access help • increasing affordable/free opportunities for those living in poverty
Reduce inequalities in economic circumstances	**Projects which support people to:** **Increase income from employment** e.g. • access to lifelong learning and volunteering opportunities to increase skills and qualifications • access to digital devices, wifi and digital skills • access to support to gain employment or develop career paths **Reduce the cost of living** e.g. • households are supported to manage debt and fuel costs

GRANT STREAM	EXAMPLE OUTCOMES
	- individuals on low incomes are supported with transport costs to access employment, training, learning - individuals and families increase access to leisure, sports and arts experiences through reducing costs and other barriers to participation - increasing access to affordable, healthy food **Increase uptake of social security and benefits in kind** e.g. - providing support to individuals to maximise their household income
Reduce Midlothian carbon emissions to net zero	**Projects that support communities to contribute to initiatives to improve carbon reduction** e.g. - promote local food growing - reducing, reusing and recycling waste - promote engagement around climate change issues - develop managed open spaces in communities including community woodlands - promote 20 minute neighbourhoods where people are less reliant on commuting to access work and services - promote/facilitate active travel (walk, cycle, bus) - develop employment in green technologies - conserve green spaces and the natural environment in line with Midlothian Local Development Plan - community driven citizen science projects

Tips for Completing your Application Form

Please provide all of the critical details in the bid itself, rather than attaching it in supporting documentation. Do not assume the scoring panel has prior knowledge of your organisation or project, even if you have been funded previously.

Subheadings and bullet points are helpful for breaking up long sections of text!

Question 1

How many people will benefit?

Be as specific as possible. Based on your best estimate, please tell us how many people or organisations will participate in the funded activity or receive services from it. Numbers should be realistic rather than over-optimistic. For example, if it's a geographically-focused project, please don't simply give us the population figure for your whole town unless you can demonstrate how you will reach them all!

Question 2

As clearly as possible, tell us here WHAT you want to do with the council grant. Please describe the activities or services you will deliver and how you will deliver them: for example: face to face or online, by using new or existing members of staff, volunteers, sessional workers or other.

Question 3

This is where you link what you will actually deliver with the benefits that you want to make, and give us an idea of how you will show that through evaluation.

Outputs are the specific goods, services or activities that will be delivered. Please be as specific as possible

about the activity and the estimated numbers of people who will take part.
For example:
- *5 training workshops will be delivered to roughly 20 people each*
- *10 new volunteer opportunities will be created for people in our community garden*
- *100 people will be offered individual advice and support*

Outcomes are the changes that you will make as a result of the activities. Ideally, they should be presented using words such as 'more', 'better', 'improved,' 'increased,' etc. You should link your outcomes to the outputs that you are delivering as directly as possible.
For example:
- *Participants involved in training will have greater skills and self-confidence, leading to better outcomes in the labour market*
- *Volunteers will experience better mental health and reduced isolation*
- *Clients will feel that they have more control of their household finances*

Evaluation is how you will know you have made a difference. You may use different methods depending on your project, but this could include evaluation forms, focus groups, one to one feedback sessions, or other. You should consider your baseline knowledge, i.e. what you know at the START of the project so that you can measure the changes. Depending on your project, it may be important to measure where clients or beneficiaries are at the beginning and at various intervals throughout the project, not just at the end.

Question 4

In this question, we want to know WHY this project is needed. A strong bid will provide evidence of need, which may come from direct community engagement or research that you have done or data from existing sources . We'd like to know how your project will fill a gap in services and be confident that it will not duplicate work that may already be going on.

Here we also want to know how you believe your project will help meet the outcome of the grant stream that you have selected. Have a look at the menu of example outcomes under each stream or choose your own, but please demonstrate clearly how your activity will lead to better outcomes for local people with that selected theme.

It would strengthen your bid if you could tell us HOW YOU WILL KNOW this. Please provide a little detail about how you intend to evaluate your project.

Question 5

We like projects to be connected with what is already happening here in Midlothian. Please also use this section to tell us WHICH other local organisations or agencies you may be working in partnership with and some details of that partnership. For example, tell us if you're collaborating on delivery, signposting, referring people to them or taking referrals from them. You can also tell us if you're using their premises or drawing upon their expertise in some way.

We want to see that you've already done some of the groundwork in terms of building these relationships, so please give us some detail about how you've established links.

Question 6

We want to know about the expertise and skills you have within your organisation and how that makes you best placed to deliver this project. Examples might include:
- Knowledge of and established links with the local community;
- The skills, knowledge and experience of volunteers and/or directors;
- Staff members with expertise;
- Your organisation's track record in delivery;
- Training that your team has undertaken
- Assets and resources you have, including space, equipment, etc.

Question 7

It is not enough under this question to say that your organisation supports equal opportunities and is open to everyone in the community. Consider:

- What Policies and Procedures do you have in place that promote accessibility? If you do not have an equal opportunities policy then you may wish to write one. Contact MVA if you need assistance to do so.
- What do you do to make your premises accessible e.g. ramps, opening hours, outreach?.
- How do you market your services to make sure that everyone knows about them e.g. marketing to under-represented groups, Plain English, Other languages, Large print?
- How do you support vulnerable service users to participate? Do you give them additional support?
- Do you do any active work with your service users on equalities?
- Do you work in partnership with any specialist organisations?
- Do you provide training on equality and diversity for staff and volunteers?

Question 8

We know this is always a hard question to answer. Please consider:

- Timescales for identifying and applying for alternative funding, as well as any potential sources (as far as is possible at this stage);
- Whether it is viable to generate income through social enterprise, and what you will need to do in order for this to happen;
- Whether after three years, the project may need to develop or change and timescales for planning this;
- How you may wrap up the project if alternative funding or income is not available.

You will find out by the end of December 2021 if your application has been successful.

Further Support

If you need any additional support, further information or help with completing the application please contact: grants@midlothian.gov.uk or info@mvacvs.org.uk

Dates	Training and Information Sessions
Wed 8th Sept 10:00 – 11:30am	**Writing a good funding application** For those interested in applying for Midlothian's large grants funding programme https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/writing-a-good-funding-application-tickets-167283145391
Tues 21st Sept 12:00 - 13:00 Thurs 23rd Sept 17:00 – 18:00 Mon 27th Sept 19:00 – 20:00 Thurs 30th Sept 12:00 – 13:00	**Online drop in sessions** Find out more about the grants programme and an opportunity to discuss ideas https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/communities-and-lifelong-learning-midlothian-12452159200