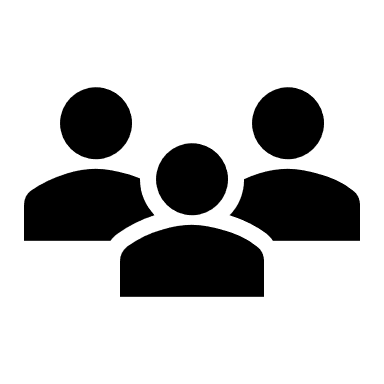


Highland Council on behalf of the

Highland Employability Partnership



Community Engagement

Challenge Fund

2022-23

**GUIDELINES**

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| **The Highland Employability Partnership (HEP)** |

No One Left Behind (NOLB) aims to change the employability system in Scotland to make it more adaptable, responsive and person-centred. In Highland this will be delivered via the Highland Employability Partnership (HEP) and 3 sub-Highland Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) in North Highland, West Highland and the Inner Moray Firth.

The Highland Employability Partnership (HEP) was re-established in 2021. It is a multi-agency approach to ensure that partners work collaboratively to deliver employability services across the Highland Council area. Through collective leadership, the Partners aim to develop shared objectives to service design which addresses the need of both clients and employers and embraces greater integration and alignment of resources in order to simplify and maximise opportunities.

The aim of the HEP is to work with individuals and employers to raise as many Highland residents as possible out of poverty through sustainable and fair work; supporting those who face multiple barriers into employment and enabling progression out of poverty for those who are already in work.

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| **About the Fund** |

Utilising Scottish Government funding in support of No One Left Behind in the Highlands, HEP partners have agreed to run a one-off Community Engagement Challenge Fund in financial year 2022/23.

The fund is open to Highland based, constituted community organisations to apply for funding of up to £10,000. The purpose being to develop approaches within communities which identify residents who would benefit from employability support services, in particular, enabling engagement with:

1. people in the community who wish to work but are currently not in employment or engaged with employability support; and/or
2. people for whom disability is a significant employability barrier; and/or
3. working parents seeking to up-skill and develop a career path

As this is a one-off programme, we are particularly keen to support innovative approaches that if successful, can potentially be supported longer term.

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| **Project Requirements** |

**Who can apply?**

The fund is open to constituted community organisations, with their primary base in the Highland Council area and support people living in the Highland Council area.

Organisations may submit a maximum of one project per organisation for this fund.

**Who cannot apply?**

* Individuals
* Public bodies including schools, colleges, universities and ALEOs
* Commercial organisations
* Community and third-sector organisations with their primary base out with the Highland Council area.

**Project Timeframe**

The fund will support projects which will start between 1st November 2022 and 31st January 2023. All must be fully completed by no later than 31st March 2023.

**Financial support**

We anticipate that the fund will be able to support about 20 projects. Applications may be made for a minimum of £2,500 and a maximum of £10,000, with up to 80% of project costs supported. The remaining 20% can be made up as in kind / volunteer costs and / or with cash.

You must ensure however, that none of the remaining 20% is made up as cash contributed by Highland Council, the Scottish Government or the European Social Fund.

All projects which contribute to wages or fees during the delivery period of the project, must pay at least the Scottish Living Wage (currently £9.90 per hour)

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| **Making an application** |

All applicants must apply via email, using the form which is available in word format below.



When applying you must include (or provide a link to) the required supporting documents listed below:

* Constitution or Memorandum and Articles of Association
* Evidence that the primary base of your organisation is within the Highland Council area
* Most recent annual accounts or if not available, the last 3 bank statements
* A bank statement to prove that the organisation has an active UK bank account at the time of application
* Child protection and / or Safeguarding policy
* Equal opportunities policy or statement

Application forms and supporting documents must be submitted by 5pm on Monday 24th October 2022 to [employability@highland.gov.uk](mailto:employability@highland.gov.uk)

Applications which don’t use the application form and / or don’t provide the supporting documentation outlined by the closing date will not be assessed.

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| **What happens next?** |

**Stage 1 – Acknowledgment**

Once an application has been received, you will be sent an acknowledgement within 2 working days. If you haven’t received this after this timeframe, please contact [employability@highland.gov.uk](mailto:employability@highland.gov.uk)

**Stage 2 – Eligibility check**

Before a formal assessment is undertaken, the following checks will be made. Applications which do not fulfil these eligibility criteria will not be assessed.

* The application was submitted by 5pm on Monday 24th October 2022, using the application form.
* The applicant is a constituted community organisation, with their primary base in the Highland Council area.
* The project will commence between 1st November 2022 and 31st January 2023.
* The project will be completed no later than 31st March 2023.
* The total sum of money applied for is between £2,500 and £10,000
* The application is for no more than 80% of the total costs.
* The source of the remaining 20% is clearly outlined as in-kind and / or cash.
* The project isn’t already in receipt of cash from Highland Council, the Scottish Government or the European Social Fund.
* Full projected income and expenditure outlined in the application.
* Projects which contribute to wages or fees during the delivery period of the project, must pay at least the Scottish Living Wage (currently £9.90 per hour)
* All supporting documents or links to them provided with the application.
* Application signed by two persons from the organisation

**Stage 3 – Assessment**

Once it has been established that the application is eligible, formal assessment will begin. Assessments will be undertaken by 3 representatives drawn from either the North Highland, West Highland or Inner Moray Firth local employability partnerships, depending on where the proposed project is expected to be delivered.

Assessments will then be presented as recommendations to the Highland Council HEP chair seeking approval, to ensure that the council’s responsibilities as lead accountable body and budget holder are fulfilled.

The assessment will be in four sections as shown below, with the detailed questions for each section laid out in the application form. Each section will be scored 0 to 4 as shown below. For applications to be approved, each section must achieve a score of a least 2 i.e. satisfactory.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| No answer | Unsatisfactory | Satisfactory | Good | Very Good |

All sections are important, but each has a weighting, indicating the importance of the information in relation to the others. In this case, the quality of the project idea is the most important consideration and therefore has the highest weighting.

Finally, the score and the weighting for each section will be multiplied together to give a total out of 32. Applications will be ranked highest to lowest, with funding allocated in that order until funds are fully utilised.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Score 0-4**  (4 being the highest) | **Weighting**  (1-3) | **Total**  (Score x Weighting) |
| Section 1: The Project |  | 3 |  |
| Section 2: Innovation |  | 1 |  |
| Section 3: Ability to deliver |  | 2 |  |
| Section 4: Budget |  | 2 |  |
| **Total out of 32** | | |  |

**Stage 4 - Decision**

Once the assessment has been completed, applicants will be informed of the outcome – either successful or unsuccessful.

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| **If your application is successful** |

**Payments**

If your application is successful, 80% of the award will be paid out at the start of the project and once the funding agreement has been returned.

The remaining funding will be paid out once there is clear evidence that the initial 80% has been utilised as per the agreement, the project has been completed and a final report submitted. The final payment may be reduced if there is evidence that the full sum isn’t required.

There may be some flexibility to this schedule if there is a reasonable requirement.

**Recording and Monitoring**

Engaging with people in your community who could benefit from employability support is the primary aim of this fund. Successful applicants will be expected to record and monitor the progress of everyone they engage with for reporting purposes in a secure manner and if need be, for signposting them to other services to ensure the best outcome for the individual.

**Final Report**

At the end of the project and to claim the final payment, a final report will be required describing how the project was delivered, what outcomes were achieved, how the funding was utilised, what lessons were learned (both positive and negative) and what next steps are planned.

**Publicity**

If you are successful, you will be expected to acknowledge the support of the Scottish Government and Highland Council in any publicity. You will need to show examples of this within the final report.

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| **More information** |

If you have any queries or would like more information, email to [employability@highland.gov.uk](mailto:employability@highland.gov.uk)

Privacy information relating to this funding scheme can be found on the Highland Council website [here.](https://www.highland.gov.uk/directory_record/1831004/employability_grant)