



Growing through giving

# ESF Community Grants in the North East 2011-13

## Guidance



European Union  
European Social Fund  
Investing in jobs and skills

**Skills  
Funding  
Agency**

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## **Section 1 - Introduction**

The North East ESF Community Grants 2011-2013 programme provides grants of up to £12,000 to small, third sector, voluntary and community organisations to engage with local communities to deliver a range of skills and employment support to enable people from the hardest to reach communities, experiencing multiple disadvantages, to make progress towards the labour market.

The programme is funded jointly by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the European Social Fund (ESF). The grant programme will be managed by County Durham Community Foundation in partnership with Tees Valley Community Foundation and Community Foundation Tyne and Wear and Northumberland, acting as the grant co-ordinating bodies, and Acumen Community Enterprise Development Trust who will provide capacity building support. A Regional Grants Panel has been established to oversee the programmes' policies and procedures and the implementation of the programme. Successful applications will be selected by this Regional Panel.







## Section 2 - Eligibility

### 2.1 Organisations










The ESF North East Community Grants programme is designed to assist small not-for-profit groups based in, and run by, people from the community they support.

### 2.2 Eligible

In order to be an eligible applicant for an ESF Community Grant, organisations must satisfy the following criteria:

-  Be a charity (not necessarily registered), a community group or a not-for-profit organisation.
-  Be locally established, be based and provide services in the North East Region covering Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham and Darlington and the Tees Valley.
-  As the aim of the scheme is to fund **small** organisations, 'small' is defined as having a maximum annual income threshold of £200,000, calculated as an average of the group's income as taken from the last 3 signed off sets of accounts.
-  Have a written constitution, or set of rules, which has been formally adopted (e.g. agreed at a meeting of the membership and signed and dated by officers of the organisation).
-  Have appropriate safeguarding policies in place to assist the target group and to deliver their project service(s).
-  Have a bank account in the organisation's name with a minimum of two unrelated signatories or, if the group does not have a bank account, have the agreement of a nominated group to receive the funding on their behalf and to accept financial responsibility for the award.

### 2.3 Not Eligible

-  Individuals (not representing a group)
-  Groups that consist of one family
-  Statutory bodies
-  Profit making organisations
-  Grant making bodies applying for funding to redistribute to individuals or groups.
-  Political groups
-  Larger more established organisations
-  Those owned or part-owned by other/larger/non eligible organisations (part-owned is defined as 25% ownership or more)
-  Those who currently hold SFA or Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) mainstream activity funding or ESF co-financing (in the case of part-owned groups, if the umbrella organisation or any of its subsidiaries has received the aforementioned funding, the part-owned group is not eligible). *Mainstream national employability contracts funded by DWP and the SFA that are being*

*delivered by prime contractors in the North East region include: the Work Programme, NOMS, Skills Support for the Unemployed and Skills Support for Redundancy. Shortly to be launched is the DWP ESF Programme to support Families with Multiple Problems*

 The following programmes:






- 16-18 Apprenticeships
- Offender Learning 7 Skills Service (OLASS)
- Programmes for the Unemployed (PFU); response to Redundancy; Young Person's Guarantees, 6 Month Offer; Employability Skills Programme
- European Social Funding (ESF)
- Adult Safeguarded Learning Programmes; Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy; Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities; Wider Family Learning; Personal & Community Development Learning.
- Formal First Step
- Family Learning Impact Fund.

Note: Organisations unable to meet aspects of the eligibility criteria set out above, but demonstrating that they can effectively target a priority group that would not otherwise be engaged, may be provided with support to access the funding in future rounds.



## 2.4 Projects





ESF Community Grants will focus on the hardest to reach communities and individuals who have difficulty accessing mainstream provision and/or ESF.

Community Grants provide "project based funding" - a grant should fund the delivery costs of a distinct activity - the project. Community Grants cannot simply be used to meet core costs. A project must help unemployed or economically inactive people who are at a particular disadvantage in the labour market **move towards employment**. This can cover a wide range of activities including:







-  First contact engagement activities, e.g. activities which help people who are not normally in contact with official organisations, for example by arranging events or training in places that such people feel comfortable to visit.
-  Projects to improve confidence, motivation and social integration such as sport, gardening, music, art and other creative activities.
-  Developing local networks and groups to support people to get a job or access learning e.g. Jobs Club or Learning Champion type activity.
-  Softer skills development e.g. assertiveness, anger management and motivation.
-  Innovative approaches to attract under-represented groups into learning.

Projects could include aspects of the following:

-  Initial help with basic skills
-  Taster work experience, including voluntary work, or to encourage take up of learning






-  Non-accredited learning first steps training advice and guidance
-  Job search assistance and or mentoring
-  Confidence building and personal development - basic help with skills for life
-  First contact engagement activities e.g. to provide support to individuals to overcome barriers to learning and or /employment

Projects must consider that all activity supported through this funding programme is subject to inspection by Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. Therefore the experience of participants (learners) is of paramount importance. Projects need to ensure that they build the following aspects into delivery:

-  An induction process
-  An initial assessment process
-  Completion of an Individual Learning Plan
-  Gathering participant feedback
-  A measurement of distance travelled (soft outcomes)
-  Final assessment and destination








## 2.5 Target Groups and Priority


The target groups are those individuals who are eligible beneficiaries of ESF Priority 1 funding in the region. This includes unemployed people and economically inactive people aged 18 years or over who are from the hardest to reach communities and who have difficulty accessing mainstream provision and/or ESF. Priority will be given to projects which support the following groups:

-  Participants with disabilities and health conditions
-  Participants who are lone parents
-  Participants who are aged 50 or over (but still seeking to enter the labour market)
-  Participants from ethnic minority groups
-  Participants who are females

The aim of the programme is to move people closer to the labour market, therefore all participants should be either registered unemployed or economically inactive, **projects cannot support people already in employment.**

Types of project which cannot be supported

-  Projects that promote political beliefs
-  Projects that promote religious beliefs
-  Projects benefiting people in employment
-  Projects benefiting people aged under 18
-  Projects that include the costs of building, repairs or structural work
-  Projects already in receipt of money from ESF
-  Projects normally the responsibility of the Government or another public service provider/agency

-  Projects which duplicate provision already supported through existing SFA or Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) mainstream activity or ESF co-financing.

## 2.6 Area of Delivery












ESF Community Grants are expected to help in particular those living in areas of greatest deprivation and areas with the highest levels of unemployment. Priority will be given to those projects delivering in areas of deprivation which are not a specific target for other funding streams.

## 2.7 Expenditure

The maximum grant available is £12,000. Applicants should work out costs carefully - there will be a need to make estimates but they should only ask for what is needed so that as many as possible can benefit from the Programme. Costs do not just include the expenditure associated with delivery but also the expenditure associated with administering that delivery. Not all projects will require or ask for the maximum of £12,000.

Costs included must be essential to the project. ESF Community Grants cannot pay for the normal running costs of an organisation, although projects may claim the proportion which is directly spent on the project. Grants must only be spent on the costs of the project. All costs must be eligible under European Social Fund rules (see **Annex 3**).

What grants cannot pay for

-  Individual items of equipment costing more than £1,000 even if you contribute to the rest of the cost yourself. There is no specific limit to the number of items costing less than £1,000 that can be purchased; however ESF aims to support people and our Regional Grants Approval Group will not consider that a proposal offers value for money if the bulk of the expenditure is to be on equipment.
-  Purchase of second hand equipment
-  Building, repairs or structural work
-  Buying property or land
-  Purchase of vehicles
-  Single trips or outings purely for a social benefit
-  Tickets, gifts or prizes purely for a social benefit
-  Loans cannot be made with grant money
-  Reclaimable VAT
-  Travel outside the UK
-  Bank charges, legal fees, fines or costs arising from legal action

NB - All funded organisations will be required to keep copies of paperwork they have sent to the Community Foundation as evidence of expenditure eg invoices,

timesheets, receipts, cheques and bank statements relating to their project. Documents will need to be retained in line with ESF guidance until 2022.

## **Section 3 - Capacity**

### **3.1 Building Capacity**

The Regional Grants Panel also aims to increase the capacity of small voluntary and community sector organisations to sustain and further their role in engaging and progressing hard-to-reach groups towards the labour market. A proportion of the Community Grants funding has been ring-fenced for capacity building activity.

Acumen Community Enterprise Development Trust will work with community and voluntary organisations in the North East Region to improve and build their capacity. This will include running events and working on a 1:1 basis. They will award a total of £50,000 in capacity building grants to approximately 50 groups. Grants are to cover direct costs for quality standards/qualifications or training which cannot be provided through "Contract Matters" and its partners. They will offer hands on support to those organisations in receipt of ESF Community Grants and/or those organisations which were unsuccessful in tendering and require assistance to enable them to be in a position to gain a grant. Their key aim is to support and equip groups to understand and encourage progression into mainstream jobs or learning provision.

They will provide support to smaller community and voluntary organisations so their staff and volunteers can learn about mainstream routes to employment / training and the development of delivery mechanisms (courses, trainer skills) and in house accreditation arrangements and will help community and voluntary organisations to build their capacity to apply for ESF Community Grants.






### **3.2 Equality and Diversity**

Equality North East will feed into the equality and diversity monitoring of the programme across the North East Region with the aim of improving access for the ESF key priority groups. They will assist organisations to have a better understanding of equality and diversity monitoring to include the statutory/legislation requirements in their organisational policies and procedures.

Further information about capacity building activity will be promoted to all applicants as the programme evolves.

## Section 4 - The Application Process

### 4.1 The application form







-  Application forms and guidance on how to complete them are available on the websites of the three Community Foundations or from their offices.
-  Complete applications must be received by 5pm on the day of the published deadline in order to be considered for that round.
-  A complete application is one in which all questions have been answered fully and where all required documents have been provided.
-  Electronic copies will be accepted in order to meet the deadline. However, a signed hard copy of the electronic application, together with the required documents, **must be received within 5 working days of the deadline.** Any not received within this time will be deferred to the next round.
-  Any applications received after these deadlines will be deferred to the next round.

### 4.2 Assessment of eligibility and initial scoring

After the deadline all applications will undergo an initial eligibility assessment and scoring process which will be carried out by the Community Foundation to which the grant application has been made. To ensure standardisation across their area of benefit, each Community Foundation will use one assessor to assess all applications. A ranked list of all eligible applications will be produced for each sub-region and presented to the Regional Grants Panel.

### 4.3 Decision making process

When all applications have been ranked and assessed and scored, all eligible applications will be submitted to the Regional Grants Panel that will assess and prioritise applications for the award of grant according to:

-  The score achieved by the application
-  The level of deprivation within delivery area
-  How well the project meets the aims of the programme
-  Participant priority
-  The amount of funding available
-  The need to achieve an equitable distribution across the sub-region and region

### 4.4 Approval

The Regional Grants Panel will formally approve the award of all grants, subject to ratification by the Board of Trustees of the relevant Community Foundation.

### 4.5 Notification

The Community Foundations will then write to all applicants to inform them of the outcome of their application.

## 4.6 Completion of the Grant Agreement

Successful applications will require the project team to attend a mandatory contract meeting. After attendance two copies of the grant agreement will be sent for signature and returned so the initial grant payment can be released.

## 4.7 Payment of Grant

Once the grant agreement is signed and returned grant recipients will receive 90% funding up-front. 10% shall be retained and released on submission of all learner monitoring documentation, Equality and Diversity final self-assessments and evidence of verification of expenditure.

## 4.8 Appeals

If the reason given for rejection of your application is inaccurate, you can appeal in writing to Regional Panel via the relevant Community Foundation giving clear evidence of why the rejection reason is incorrect. The Panel will review the application taking this evidence into consideration.

You **MUST** include evidence to support your appeal and cannot appeal simply because the decision is not favourable or because you have received ESF funding through previous programmes.

Appeals will be considered at the next Regional Panel meeting if this is within 4 weeks of receipt of your appeal. If not details will be circulated to the panel electronically and a response provided within four weeks.















The Community Foundations welcome constructive feedback about any aspect of our service. These should be raised in writing with your local Community Foundation:


- **County Durham Community Foundation:**  
Brenda Dye (Grants Manager) 0191 378 6344  
[brenda@cdf.org.uk](mailto:brenda@cdf.org.uk)
- **Community Foundation serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland:**  
[Mark Pierce \(Head of Policy, Projects and Programmes\) 0191 222 0945](mailto:Mark.Pierce@communityfoundation.org.uk)  
[mp@communityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:mp@communityfoundation.org.uk)
- **Tees Valley Community Foundation:**  
Hugh McGouran (Chief Executive) 01642 260 860  
[h.mcgouran@teesvalleyfoundation.org](mailto:h.mcgouran@teesvalleyfoundation.org)

## Section 5 - If a Project is supported

### What is required?

If your project is supported you will be required to:

-  Ensure all your project participants are eligible to work in the UK.
-  Keep all documentation until 2022
-  Keep the original and or copies (if originals have been supplied for evidence purposes) receipts/invoices for your own audit purposes until 2022.
-  Keep financial records to support expenditure, such as original invoices, bank statements, staff time sheets, job descriptions and expenses payments and provide a summary statement of expenditure and copies of invoices/receipts attached for each grant at the end of the project.
-  Display the European Social Fund, Skills Funding Agency and appropriate Partnership logo on all forms, letters, posters, leaflets and other publicity materials that are produced for your Community Grants funded project
-  Have a Health and Safety policy and Public Liability Insurance.
-  If working with clients with mental health issues and/or learning or physical difficulties, you will be required to have a Vulnerable Persons' Policy and ensure that all tutors, staff and volunteers supervising vulnerable adults have an up-to-date CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) check.
-  Have an Equality and Diversity Policy and ensure that you promote equality of opportunity to all individuals in the community serviced, in internal employment and management practices, and in dealings with any partners or contractors. Equality North East can help all projects with this. (See Annex 5).
-  To integrate sustainable development issues as far as possible across all aspects of project design and delivery. Acumen Community Enterprise Development Trust can help projects with this. (See Annex 5).
-  Sign a Grant Agreement detailing the purpose of the grant, your budget, and your target outcomes.
-  Complete an ESF short record form (Individual Learning Record - ILR) for each participant, and ensure these are signed by the participant and submit the original signed forms to the Community Foundation upon request or at the end of your project which will allow the release of your final grant funding payment.
-  Complete an initial assessment form for each participant to establish a simple learning plan, with clear aim(s) and actions, for each participant. This form must be signed by the participant
-  Monitor the progress of participants using "Progress Wheel" once when they start on the project and secondly when they finish the project, both Progress Wheels must be signed by the participant.
-  Keep record to report progress regularly upon request. This will include the reporting of simple performance data and a narrative progress report. Highlight any case studies / success stories that arise from delivery and supply these to the Community Foundation upon request.

-  Complete an End of Grant report at the end of your project and feed in any information requested by the organisation to be appointed to evaluate the programme.

## **Annex 1 - Example Projects**

Examples of other projects previously supported by small grants programmes can be found at <http://www.esf-works.com/projects/short-reviews/projects>

## Annex 2 - Geographical Targeting

In order to achieve an equitable distribution across the sub-regions and the region the ESF funding available has been split by unemployment numbers of the population so that funding is targeted in areas of most need. The allocation of grant column in the table below is the total amount that is available, over the lifetime of the programme, in the three Community Foundation sub regions.

Local Authority Area	Unemployed Population	% of Regional Unemployed Population	Allocation of Grant £
Darlington	4,600		
County Durham	19,600		
		19.90%	210,485.5
Hartlepool	5,400		
Middlesbrough	7,000		
Redcar and Cleveland	7,600		
Stockton on Tees	8,100		
		23.11%	244,438.2
Newcastle	17,500		
Gateshead	8,300		
Sunderland	16,600		
South Tyneside	9,500		
North Tyneside	9,200		
Northumberland	8,200		
		56.99%	602,792.3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>121,600</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1,057,716</b>

## Annex 3 - Eligible Expenditure

Projects will be asked to give a breakdown of expected expenditure under direct costs and indirect costs.



**Direct Costs** can be directly related to the project activity e.g.

**Staff Costs** that relate to own organisation's staff and any other people employed to deliver the project eg Project Co-ordinator; Project Manager; Office Manager; Outreach staff Administrative staff; Staff Recruitment; Staff Training; Staff Travel; Trainer etc.

Staff costs can include employer's national insurance and superannuation costs. The application must account for any expected increases in grade or pay scale for the staff involved. Staff costs may include those costs covered in a person's contract of employment that are taxable incentives linked to pay and pension contributions









**Participant Costs** that are costs incurred by the project on behalf of the people they are supporting and can include childcare; subsistence; exam fees; training allowances; travel costs; participant equipment and work clothing.



**Indirect costs** that are shared organisational costs and so cannot be connected directly to project activity and are therefore difficult to attribute to the project e.g. telephone costs, gas, electricity and water. Indirect costs can be claimed on a flat rate basis provided:

-  They can be proven to be fair and equitable (a greater proportion of the costs should not be charged to the project as opposed to your organisation).
-  The estimates used to calculate the flat rate percentage are based on actual costs and backed up by a full audit trail of all invoices

Indirect costs may include advertising and promotion; cleaning; consultancy; copier rental; equipment (small items up to £1,000); depreciation of owned equipment; fax; insurance; operating equipment leases; postage; professional fees and costs; rent; room hire; service charges; stationery and office supplies; telephones/faxes; utilities.

### Ineligible Costs

-  Any expenditure before the agreed project start date (as stated in your grant agreement)
-  Loan and current account interest or any financial charge
-  Consultancy fees for the completion of the application form
-  Staff time spent completing the application form
-  Purchase of equipment over £1,000 limit
-  Purchase of buildings
-  Cost of finance leases
-  Expenditure not related to the project

-  Expenditure not supported by appropriate accounting documents
-  Any statutory training that employers must provide under health and safety legislation


Where possible we would recommend that projects support direct costs only for ease of monitoring, tracking and audit, for further information about calculating indirect costs for projects please contact County Durham Community Foundation.

For partners an additional document entitled **ESF Expenditure Guidance** has been produced.

Further and more detailed information can also be found at:


<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/manual1-v8.pdf> - particularly paragraphs 1.9 and 1.10

## **Annex 4 - Contact Details**

 Groups in County Durham and Darlington please contact:


### **County Durham Community Foundation**

Contact: Brenda Dye  
Telephone: 0191 378 6340  
Email: [brenda@cdcf.org.uk](mailto:brenda@cdcf.org.uk)  
Website: [www.cdcf.org.uk](http://www.cdcf.org.uk)

 Groups in Newcastle, Northumberland, Sunderland, Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside please contact:

### **Community Foundation Serving Tyne & Wear and Northumberland**

Contact: Sue Martin  
Telephone: 0191 222 0945  
Email: [sm@communityfoundation.org.uk](mailto:sm@communityfoundation.org.uk)  
Website: [www.communityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.communityfoundation.org.uk)



 Groups in Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar and Cleveland please contact:

### **Tees Valley Community Foundation**






Contact: Kath Dowson  
Telephone: 01642 260 860  
Email: [k.dowson@teesvalleyfoundation.org](mailto:k.dowson@teesvalleyfoundation.org)  
Website: [www.teesvalleyfoundation.org](http://www.teesvalleyfoundation.org)

## Annex 5 - Gender Equality, Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development











All groups applying for European Social Fund are required to consider what are referred to in the Programme as "cross-cutting issues" when developing their projects, these "cross-cutting issues" are:

-  Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities
-  Sustainable Development

Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities focus on securing equality for groups and seek to alleviate the disadvantages that they experience. An ESF Community Grants project can address such imbalances by ensuring that activity is opened up to the wider community and those groups who have traditionally been under-represented. Commitment to equal opportunities should be demonstrated in all aspects of project development and delivery. Practical ways that projects can raise awareness of and implement gender equality and equal opportunities with participants and project staff. The sorts of things to consider are:

-  Why the activity is appropriate and relevant to your participants.
-  How it will assist them progress towards the labour market.
-  The processes a project already has in place for ensuring equality of opportunity.
-  How projects will consider the needs of participants.
-  How projects will consider the training needs of staff.

### Questions to ask yourself to ensure Equality of Opportunity

-  How will project information be disseminated to ensure disadvantaged groups are aware of the opportunities available?
-  Where public transport is inaccessible or infrequent, how will this be addressed?
-  Are there parking concessions available for people with disabilities?
-  Are project activities co-ordinated with public transport timetables?
-  Can people with disabilities gain access to the project venue?
-  Does the project venue have an accessible toilet for people with mobility difficulties?
-  Will project activities take place at times that do not exclude people with child or other caring responsibilities.
-  Will there be any arrangements put in place to enable people with disabilities to participate in the project (e.g. people with visual or hearing difficulties)? What procedures will be put in place to ensure staff can deal with any complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment that may be made?
-  Will specific checks be undertaken to identify any special needs for individual participants?
-  Are projects working to ensure groups have equal representation between men and women built into management structures?

- ✚ What support will be given to participants with childcare or caring responsibilities?
- ✚ What steps will be taken to ensure your project is not just reinforcing traditional stereotypes?
- ✚ Will training on avoiding gender, racial and other bias be given to any counsellors?
- ✚ Will projects ensure activities are not organised during the religious or cultural events of different groups?
- ✚ Will projects take care when producing any literature or materials to ensure it is in an accessible format?
- ✚ Does the project venue provide for the personal safety of your participants?

Sustainable Development is a process that seeks to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It does this by integrating social, environmental and economic considerations equally into every decision and action. The social element is related to addressing social exclusion, widening participation and removing barriers to work.

The economic element includes looking at addressing skills requirements and providing training to increase employability. Under the ESF Community Grants programme providers will be delivering projects that support the programme's strategic priorities of jobs and skills. They will inherently be supporting two key elements of sustainable development - the social and economic elements: (i) by helping individuals overcome barriers in the labour market; and (ii) by working towards increasing the supply and quality of workers in the labour market. The strand, which we know from past experience, is likely to need most development and support is the environmental strand. We want all projects to consider how they deliver their services in terms of trying to reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts on the environment.

The environmental element deals with environmental management in areas such as energy, water, waste and recycling, along with environmental protection and enhancement. As part of the delivery of an ESF Community Grant funded project we would like organisations to adopt one additional environmental measure and organisation will be asked to detail this within their End of Grant report.

## **Annex 6 - Larger organisations supporting applications**

If a group is not formally constituted and is applying under the umbrella of a larger organisation, the umbrella organisation must meet all the criteria for eligibility

If a group is formally constituted but does not have its own bank account, it may nominate another organisation to receive the grant on its behalf. The nominated organisation must be aware that they have been nominated and must accept financial responsibility for the grant award. If the grant is awarded, the amount paid to the nominated organisation should appear in their accounts as a restricted grant from the Foundation for the organisation that actually received the award.

The accounts for the organisation that actually receives the award should show the grant as an in-kind donation within their accounts as they have not actually received the funding.

Even when these conditions are met, if the Community Foundation and the Regional Panel still have concerns about the level of self-determination of the applicant organisation they will reserve the right not to recommend their application for support.

## **Annex 7 - Safeguarding**

It should be the duty of providers in the learning and skills sector to ensure that they have taken proper steps to safeguard learners. This is why it is important to adopt an inclusive approach to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

If working with clients with mental health issues and/or learning or physical difficulties, you will be required to have a Vulnerable Persons' Safeguarding Policy and ensure that all tutors, staff and volunteers supervising vulnerable adults have an up-to-date CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) check.

Organisations working at the grass-roots level and providing support and services within their community may not define themselves as organisations working with vulnerable adults. However because of the breadth of the definition of this group County Durham Community Foundation consider it important that groups in receipt of a Community Grant that are working with Vulnerable Adults have a Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Procedures in place that staff and volunteers have been suitably trained and that participants are made fully aware of what they can expect.

If projects do not currently have full safeguarding policies and procedures in place we can support you to achieve this.