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| East Lothian Council **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund 2024/2025****Grant Guidance Notes** |

**Introduction**

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is provided by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities via their Levelling Up programme that is providing all areas of the UK with an allocation of funding to invest in domestic priorities and targeting funding where it is needed most: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

This aligns with the Levelling Up White Paper stated missions, particularly “By 2030, pride in place, such as people’s satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.”

East Lothian Council has developed the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** with the aim to support the initial stages of potential future capital projects such as survey information, feasibility assessments, business case development etc.

The funding will be available to targeted investment opportunities identified by ELC as well as being able to assist community groups/organisations develop proposals.

The principal aim is to remove some of the barriers faced developing “good ideas” into viable projects which meet the necessary funding criteria and can progress to securing project delivery capital funding.

The supported projects must be able to demonstrate the wider aims and potential outputs that will allow future project delivery as well as the potential benefits that will be provided within the local communities and/or wider East Lothian population.

This document provides guidance to the application process and should be read carefully before submitting an application for funding.

**Fund Structure 2024-25**

East Lothian Council have been allocated funding from the UK Government through UKSPF. The funding has been allocated to support project delivery across the 3 core Intervention Priorities for UKSPF, namely Communities & Place; Supporting local Business; and People & Skills.

The **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** is being delivered as part of the Communities & Place Investment Priority to support Community Wealth and capacity building opportunities related to future capital project developments across East Lothian.

The **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** has a total budget of £50,000 for 2024-25 to assist with future capital project development costs. It is anticipated that this funding will support a **MINIMUM** of 15 individual projects.

Applications will be invited in a single funding round. A further funding round will be considered however this will be dependent on available funding.

**How Much Can Be Applied For?**

Grants of up to **£3,000** can be made from the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** at 100% of the funding required. There is no requirement for match funding or in kind contributions. The funding MUST be used to support the project development costs of a future capital project. The funding is however, NOT conditional on the future capital project actually being delivered. This means a Feasibility Study funded through the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** may conclude that a future capital project is not viable and cannot be delivered, or it may be that capital delivery funding cannot be secured to allow the project to proceed. It is hoped that this will be the exception and that projects will move forward to the delivery phase in due course.

**Eligible Area**

Applications are invited to support project development costs from communities across East Lothian. Scoring criteria will take account of areas identified within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) however this will form only part of the assessment and will not preclude ANY area being supported through the fund.

**Key Dates for 2024-25**

* 24 May 2024 Round 1 Application Period Open
* 26 July 2024 Round 1 Application Submission Deadline
* 9 August 2024 Round 1 Grant Offers Issued
* 31 December 2024 Deadline for completion of all funded works and grant expenditure
* 31 January 2025 Deadline for submission of End of Project monitoring report

**Grant Payments**

All grants will be paid on a 100% basis. There is no requirement for match funding or in kind contributions.

75% of the grant will be paid upfront (claimed by the applicant once the grant offer has been accepted) with the final 25% to be claimed when all valid cost evidence and reports are submitted.

All funded works AND all grant expenditure must be complete by 31 December 2024.

All projects must be completed and evidence, including reports and evaluation, submitted **no later than** the dates noted above in order to receive the final grant payment.

**Application Process and Assessment**

Stage 1 Community Groups / organisations with potential regeneration projects that required development stage funding to submit a completed and signed application form and any supporting information by the application submission date. (See Key Dates above)

Stage 2 Applications initially assessed by the ELC Regeneration Officer to ensure Fund eligibility. Applications that do not meet the fund eligibility will not be considered.

Stage 3 Eligible applications assessed based on the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** scoring criteria (See Appendix A) and funding recommendations prepared.

Stage 4 Funding recommendations considered by an East Lothian Council funding board / Senior Managers to determine which projects will be offered support.

Stage 5 Grant Offers issued to successful applicants and letters of explanation issued to unsuccessful applicants.

Please Note: The decision of the East Lothian Council funding board / Senior Managers is final and there is no appeals process for unsuccessful or partially funded applications.

**General Conditions of Grant / Restrictions on Funding**

* Any funding awarded is for project development / pre-contract expenditure only and all eligible costs must exclude reclaimable Value Added Tax.
* The Grantee will notify East Lothian Council as soon as possible if an underspend is anticipated.
* If the Grantee does not use the grant in the financial year 2024-25, unused grant is to be repaid to East Lothian Council unless otherwise agreed in writing.
* No part of the Grant shall be used to fund any activity or material which is party political in intention, use, or presentation or appears to be designed to affect support for a political party.
* The Grantee shall keep East Lothian Council informed of the use of their grant through the submission of project monitoring reports (if appropriate) and an end of project evaluation by 31 December 2024. East Lothian Council will issue a template for these returns.
* The Grantee shall, where reasonably practicable, acknowledge in all publicity material relating to the funded project, the contribution of East Lothian Council and the UK Government and Shared Prosperity Funding in a manner to be agreed in advance.

**Completing the Application Form**

The following guidance relates to the sections of the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** Application form. Should you require and clarification, further information or assistance completing the form then please contact: regeneration@eastlothian.gov.uk

**Section A - Organisation / Group Details**

This section seeks information about your group / organisation including its name, address, legal form and charitable status. Details are also required on the group / organisations structure and constitution as well as what its main purpose is.

Details for a Primary (day to day) and Secondary contact are also requested for correspondence during the grant process.

**Section B – Project Details**

This section seeks information about the project including its title (which can be changed at any time provided this is communicated), its location, any partner organisations involved and what type of project category it is. (Selected from a list within the application)

Details on both the long-term regeneration project being considered AND the requirements for the funding sought through the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** are needed.

The long term regeneration project is the wider capital project that the group / organisation want to deliver. This may take time to deliver or may be delivered in phases over a number of years. A descriptive summary of the long term regeneration project is required and should focus on the Vision and the need for such a project, both for the group /organisation and the community. In depth detail of the long term regeneration project is not required at this stage as it is anticipated that this will be developed as part of the funding request to the Regeneration Project Development Fund.

An indication / summary of how the long term regeneration project will meet any East Lothian Plan Objectives and East Lothian Council Climate Strategy Outcomes will however be required.

A descriptive summary of the project / services / work requiring support from the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** is needed, including what the funding will be used for (consultants fees, exploration work, surveys etc.), how this will assist with the development of the long term regeneration project, and what other development work will be required.

An indication on the likely timescales for the funded project are requested as are any other relevant timescales linked to the project development. (This could include other funding decisions or statutory approvals)

**Section C – Finance**

This section seeks information about the costs identified for the project and the grant funding required. The application to the **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** can be for an individual project cost (consultants fees, exploration work, surveys etc.) or it can be a contribution towards an overall package of funding to support a number of development costs.

Costs for each item or activity should be noted and totalled where applicable.

Other funding sources and amounts should also be identified, including own funds if applicable. The status of other funding sources should be confirmed as either Secured (grant offers issued/ accepted) or Pending (grant application submitted / being processed).

The **UKSPF Regeneration Project Development Fund** cannot fund work that has already been completed before any grant application / grant offer has been made. Development activity should also not be commenced unless funding to cover the cost of the services in full has been secured.

Cost evidence must include receipted invoices, and / or proof of payments (bank statements etc.), and / or financial / accountancy spreadsheets etc.

**Section D – Privacy Notice**

This section provides information on how we will collect, use, and dispose of any personal information / data that is collected as part of the grant application / grant offer process. Contact details are included should you wish to seek further information on this process or to make a formal complaint about how the information / data is used.

**Section E – Declaration**

The person signing this Declaration must be an Authorised Contact (Director, Office Bearer or equivalent). An electronic signature is acceptable.

**Section F – Supporting Documents Checklist**

Please use the Checklist to gather all documentation required. Some may not apply to your project but, if you are in any doubt, please contact regeneration@eastlothian.gov.uk