

South Lanarkshire Grant Policy

November 2025

Purpose of the Grant Policy

This policy establishes a clear and consistent framework for South Lanarkshire Council's grant funding processes. It aims to provide comprehensive guidance to applicants and Council Officers to ensure grants are awarded fairly, transparently, and in alignment with strategic priorities.

The policy applies to all third sector grants awarded through Council-funded programmes and also extends to situations where the Council administers external funding, ensuring that all such grants comply with minimum standards unless otherwise specified by external funders.

The policy guarantees that all grants are accessible only to eligible organisations. Supporting materials, including application guidance and monitoring templates, will be developed and regularly updated to ensure consistent implementation across all funded programmes.

Strategic Priorities

Council grants are designed to support community-led initiatives. For this purpose, "community-led" means projects and programmes where community members have meaningful involvement in decision-making, governance, and delivery.

All grant funded activities must support the aims and objectives of the Council Plan and contributing sub policies and strategies relevant to a funding programme. These policies and plans are designed in consultation with the public and all stakeholders.

The Council Plan strategic priorities:

- **People:** Prioritising people and working to reduce inequalities.
- **Progress:** Supporting progress and continual improvement in services and outcomes.
- **Planet:** Promoting sustainability and environmental responsibility across communities.

Applicants will be asked to outline which priorities their project or programme will contribute towards and how they will achieve its outcomes. Priorities will be outlined in application guidance documents.

Definition and Characteristics of Grants

Grants are discretionary financial awards intended to support activities that further the Council's strategic aims without expecting commercial return.

Key characteristics include:

- Grants are not goods or services and application does not confer entitlement to payment.
- Grants have terms and conditions attached to them including specific reporting, permitted use of funds, and outcome achievement requirements.
- Awards are made at the Council's discretion, subject to budget availability and eligibility criteria.
- All grants must demonstrably deliver public benefit, Best Value, and be aligned with the Council Plan and relevant policies.

Properly constituted grants will not normally be subject to the procurement rules. This does not remove the Council's commitment to maintain fairness, transparency,

and openness in grant awarding processes unless a documented and approved exception applies.

Activities that constitute statutory services or involve procurement of goods or services for the Council should not be funded through grants but via formal procurement processes and would be subject to the Council's Standing Orders on Contracts.

The following characteristics will normally help determine whether a grant is the suitable funding route:

- It should not be for critical service requirements or those the council has a statutory responsibility to deliver; grant funding is for discretionary objectives and outcomes.
- The council will not normally receive services itself.
- The council is providing funding to support activities that will help it to meet its commitments to South Lanarkshire and where the organisation does not have sufficient resources to deliver those activities on a self-sustaining basis itself.
- A grant will normally be out with the scope of VAT and the Scottish public procurement regulations.
- If the grant has (or could have) an effect on trade or investment, then the subsidy control implications should be assessed.

General Principles and Application of this Policy

- Grant applications shall be open to all eligible third sector organisations, except as provided for in terms of this Policy.
- Any exceptions to this policy will meet a criteria for exemption and must still be published in the Council's online Grant Register for transparency.
- Application of this policy is subject to compliance with any additional external funder requirements and/or when managing third-party funds with additional requirements.
- Applicants are encouraged to secure multiple funding sources to promote financial sustainability and reduce reliance on Council grants.
- All awards and exceptions will be recorded and published in the Council's online Grant Register within 30 days of award.

Eligibility Criteria

Only constituted forms of third sector groups can apply for third sector council grants. Individuals cannot apply for grants on behalf of an organisation.

- All organisations must have a suitable level of public liability and other necessary insurance in place for their activities.
- For grants exceeding £10,000, organisations must provide at least 12 months' audited or independently examined financial accounts, a conflict-of-interest declaration, and confirmation that trustees or directors are not disqualified from holding office.
- Bank accounts used for grant payments must be in the legal name of the applying organisation, and personal accounts are strictly prohibited.
- Organisations not meeting constitution requirements will be encouraged to seek support from recognised support bodies, such as VASLan, before applying.
- Due diligence will be undertaken in a proportionate manner to the grant size. See Figure 1.
- All grant applicants must demonstrate the public benefit through the application process.
- All grants will exclude funding for political activities, religious promotion or profit-making. There will be no personal financial benefit from Council grants.

FIGURE 1:

Amount	Length of Funding	Application	Minimum Due Diligence	Monitoring	Evaluation
Up to £1,000	Specified period up to 1 year.	Brief form	Governing document & public liability insurance 2 Bank statements or annual accounts.	End of grant form within 1 month	None required
£1,000-£10,000	Specified period up to 1 year.	Brief form	Governing document & public liability insurance 2 Bank statements or annual accounts.	End of grant form within 1 month	None required
£10,001-£20,000	Specified period up to 1-2 years.	Standard Form	Governing document & public liability insurance Bank statements Copy of independently verified accounts	End of Grant form within 2 months	None required- optional and welcomed.
£20,001-£50,000	Specified period- at least 1-3 years. Multi-year funding may be considered but will depend on source of funding and will be subject to future affordability and the open process may be more rigorous.	Enhanced - Application Form Provision of a proposal on how specified outcomes will be achieved.	Governing document & public liability insurance 2 Bank statements if new supplier Copy of independently verified accounts	1 mid grant and 1 end of grant monitoring meeting and report. End of grant report outlines achievement against outcomes. Within 2 months	Outcomes reporting will require a degree of evaluation within the project. An independent evaluation may be required
£50,000 +	Specified period at least 1-5 years. Multi-year funding may be considered but will depend on source of funding and will be subject to future affordability and the open process may be more rigorous.	Enhanced Form Provision of a proposal on how specified outcomes will be achieved Key Milestones or project plan Multi-year funding- financial projections.	Governing document & public liability insurance 2 Bank statements if new supplier Copy of independently verified accounts	1 mid grant and end of grant monitoring report and meeting. End of Grant report outlines achievement against plan and outcomes. Further monitoring and reports against project plan to be agreed for multi-year funds.	Outcomes reporting will require a degree of evaluation within the project. An independent evaluation may be required.

- All grants will be subject to the grantee signing terms and conditions as set by the Council.

Grant Categories and Funding Mechanisms

Except in certain circumstances where a grant meets a set criteria (to be determined), all grants available across the Council will be open to an open and transparent process once every grant cycle. A grant cycle depends on the nature and purpose of a grant and the funding source.

The Council offers grants through defined categories:

- **Community Small Grants:** Up to £1,000
- **Community Medium Grants:** £1,001 to £19,999
- **Third Sector Investment Grants:** £20,000 +
- **Participatory Budgeting (PB)** (all values)

Under each grant category, more than one grant programme may be run at any one time.

Council reserves the right to amend award amounts, close application windows, or restrict award numbers in response to available budgets and strategic priorities, with all changes documented and publicly accessible.

Restrictions and Use of Funds

Any restrictions on grant size or conditions will be outlined up front in application guidance. Restrictions might include:

- Eligibility
- Duration of funding
- Allowable and non-allowable costs
- Match funding requirements

Management and overheads can be included in cost breakdowns where eligibility criteria permit. When permitted by a funding source, a maximum of 20% of total grant budget can be attributed to these costs.

Multi-year grants will not receive automatic inflationary increases; applicants should anticipate and budget accordingly.

Application

Apart from participatory budgeting programmes, information on Council funded grant programmes will be centralised in one place on the South Lanarkshire Council Website.

All applications will be submitted via an online portal or using a downloadable form for the relevant grant category.

Application guidance and a required documents checklist will be available for all grants.

Application guidance will outline the assessment criteria and the outcomes being sought through the grant.

The terms and conditions for each grant will be available at the point of application.

Required documents for due diligence will vary depending on size and purpose of grant but are likely to include bank statements, safeguarding policies, insurance and recent independently examined accounts.

Deadlines and grant cycle timescales will be published on the South Lanarkshire Council website.

Contact details for support will be provided for each grant.

Funding support is also available through VASLan.

Assessment, and Decision-Making

Applications will be assessed and scored against criteria relating to the strategic or policy outcomes they support. In addition, we may consider community impact, value for money, and sustainability. Scoring criteria will be provided in application guidance.

South Lanarkshire Council staff, and at times external partners, local residents or third-party panels will score applications and make recommendations for decision.

Decisions will be communicated within agreed timelines, typically within six weeks of the application deadline.

Third-Party Delivery and Accountability

The Council may use arms-length bodies or other appropriate organisations, partnership panels or community networks to carry out grant disbursement activities on their behalf.

In these instances, there will be an agreement in place with the bodies that set out the nature of the relationship, the form of accountability, how the assessment panel will be constituted, how the organisation or network is funded or will be funded, and details of the activities they will engage in.

Such bodies will be subject to the standards set out in this Grant Policy unless expressly agreed by the Council.

Terms and Conditions

Grant awards are governed by formal agreements specifying:

- The purpose of the grant and measurable outcomes
- Grant duration and payment schedules
- Reporting and monitoring requirements
- Conditions for repayment of unused or misused funds

Grant recipients must comply with all relevant legislation, including governance, employment practices, safeguarding, insurance, equal opportunity, and data protection.

Any proposed changes to funded activities require the Council's prior written approval. The Council reserves the right to recover funds for misuse or non-compliance.

Publicity related to funded projects must acknowledge Council support.

In circumstances where an external fund is being distributed through the Council, additional terms and conditions of the respective funder may also apply.

Fair Work Commitment

The Council encourages funded organisations to adopt fair work practices, including workforce development, diversity and inclusion, fair pay (including the Real Living Wage), and effective voice mechanisms such as trade union recognition.

Applicants for Scottish Government-funded grants must demonstrate Living Wage Employer status as a condition of funding.

Monitoring, Reporting

Monitoring requirements will be proportionate to grant size and duration, including financial and performance reports, site visits, and independent evaluations where appropriate as outlined in figure 1.

Where required by the funding source, additional compliance information, such as receipts or bank statements, may be required to evidence the monitoring information

of for audit purposes. This will be identified in any award agreement but may be subject to change during the award period. For example, evidence of the payment of living wages for all Scottish Government funded grants.

Failure to comply with monitoring requirements or reporting obligations may result in suspension of payments, grant recovery, or ineligibility for future funding.

For grants over £20,000, a designated Grant Monitoring Officer will oversee compliance, progress, and outcome achievement.

Responsibility and Conflicts of Interest

Each Executive Director has responsibility for all grants awarded by their Resource and is accountable to the Council for the performance of their duties in relation to grant award and management which are: -

- To ensure compliance with this Grant Policy
- To adhere to the Council's commitment to co-production
- To ensure that the grants register is updated within 30 days following the issue of a grant award letter

All individuals involved in grant assessment or decision-making, including Council officers, elected members, and third-party partners, must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest in advance of any decisions being taken.

Records of such declarations and management actions will be recorded in meeting records to ensure accountability and public confidence.

Complaints

Complaints regarding the process may be submitted through the Council's complaints procedure.

Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Community Engagement Team or sooner if required by legislative changes or operational needs. Updates will be published on the Council website.

Grant Policy Action Plan

Action	By who	By when
Create Grants webpage	CET and working Group	Dec 25
Develop and publish an online grant register	CET and working group	March 26
Create 3 application form templates in line with figure1. <i>Include space for management and overheads where eligible</i>	CET and working group	Dec 25
Develop an exceptions criteria	CET and working group	Dec 25
Develop template scoring matrix	CET and working group	Dec 25
Draft standard Third party grant giving agreement	CET and working group	Dec 25

Draft Template Agreements in line with Figure 1.	Legal Working Group	Dec 25
Support and Guidance for Officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Rule Book Application of grant policy Grant administration and monitoring 	CET and working Group	Feb 26
Online learning module	CET and working Group	June 26
Nominate participants for VASlan Funders Forum	Working Group	Dependent on VASlan timescales
Develop shared due diligence records	CET and working Group	March 26
Explore corporate grant software	Working Group	March 26