



Funded by
UK Government

Employability Fund

Support to make a strong application

2023 - 2025



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HOW TO WRITE A STRONG APPLICATION

PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

Always read the funding guidance and be certain that your project meets at least one of the criteria listed.

Before applying for any funding, you should always be well prepared. Know your project and practice by explaining it to a friend before putting it into words. Remember that space in the online application form is very limited, so be clear, compelling, and concise – do not repeat anything.

Working through the application in a separate document will help you write a stronger application; we recommend doing this in a Word document which allows you to use spell check before transferring it to the application form.

Begin by drafting an overall summary of your entire project, making it straight to the point while covering the important parts that you feel are essential to making your project work. Know your demographic and tell us who will take part, what their needs are, the activities you intend to deliver and the differences you aim to make through your project. You will need this for your application form.



When writing your application, always think about these three questions:

01 What is the need for your work?

02 What will you need to deliver to address the need?

03 What difference will your activities make?



What is the need for your work?

You know this better than the funder, do not assume they know this.

Tell us who will take part in your project and their needs.

Tell us how they are excluded or disadvantaged and what research or knowledge you have to back this up.

Explain the geographic area or areas your project will cover. Are you targeting rural areas, specific communities or wider areas in South Lanarkshire?

What will you do to address the need?

You will be asked to provide information to describe your activities and how you will deliver your project. This is where we want to see the passion you have for your project. This can be difficult to express on paper but give the funder as much information as possible. This information could include:

- » What your grant will pay for, how long your activities will last and what timescale you will follow.
- » How many people will take part in total?
- » How many new volunteers/staff are needed to help your project be successful?

Your project should fit with one or more essential priorities as outline in the application guidance. These are:

- » People taking part in work experience programs. An example could be organisations supporting people in job-searching activities i.e. identifying volunteering options, any other work experience programs.
- » People engaged in job-searching following support, for example organizations supporting people in job-searching activities i.e. job clubs, identifying skills, writing CVs, identifying volunteering or training options.
- » People in employment, including self-employment, following support, i.e. when organisation is offering advice- how to find job and matching with current skills, advice or working in partnership on self-employment.
- » People in education/training in order to gain skills needed to employment in the future i.e. volunteers identifying education destination as a result of support during volunteering experience, staff in particular roles looking to enhance their skills in order to support individuals better.
- » People experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision, i.e. when organisation is helping with project like mentorship for people with low self- confidence and mental health barrier which previously stopped them from employment, supported employment options etc.

Consider the impact your project will make for everyone directly involved and for those in the wider community.

Organisational status and other documents

There are a few more things to think about before you apply. Make sure you have your governing document to hand and available to send to VASLan. This should be your constitution which explains your aims and objectives and describes how your organisation is run.

Please contact us if you would like one of our capacity officers to come and offer advice on writing a strong constitution. This is a free service.

We will ask you to provide a copy with your application. If you do not have a written constitution, please select the “un-constituted organisation” option on the form. This will mean that you have to have a supporting, constituted organisation to support your application.

As standard practice we will also require you to provide a copy of your most recent annual accounts or if you don't have these, your annual financial statement.

Make sure your organisation or group is eligible to apply. We are encouraging applications from small, grass root organisations, we have capacity officers who can support you in applying if you are unsure or unconstituted please contact us if you require this support.

We welcome applications from a range of voluntary, ‘not for profit’ organisations, associations, groups and clubs or partnerships which have a strong community focus for their activities.

Eligible Organisations

- » Community councils
- » Incorporated third/voluntary sector organisations, including:
 - *Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO)*
 - *Social enterprise companies*
 - *Asset locked companies or Community Interest Companies (CIC)*
 - *Not-for-profit Companies Limited by Guarantee*
- » Constituted third/voluntary sector organisations, including:
 - *Unincorporated Associations*
 - *Charitable Trusts*
 - *Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies*
- » Un-constituted third / voluntary organisations
 - *If you don't have a written governing document, you can apply for grant funding up to a maximum of £2,000 but only where you are working in partnership with either a community council or an established, incorporated or constituted organisation that is willing to hold the funding on your behalf. If you select this category, we will ask for further information and written evidence to show an agreement in place between organisations.*
 - *You will need a bank account in the name of your organisation or group. However, unconstituted organisations can ask a partner organisation to hold grant funding on their behalf. We will only ask for your bank details if your application is successful.*
- » Parent councils - for projects that help people who are 16+ only. Please note that parent councils must have their own constitution and bank account (a voluntary organisation can hold funds on your behalf, if a written agreement is in place).



GENERAL ADVICE



It is really important that you take time to read the guidelines for the fund carefully.



Please apply to the Employability Fund at your earliest convenience to avoid disappointment. Do not wait until the last minute before submitting your application. By doing this you run the risk of leaving it to late and the fund will no longer be able to support your project.



You should aim to describe how your work fits with the funding criteria and priorities. If your work or project doesn't fit at all, then please don't apply.



Please make sure you answer all the questions in the application form directly.



Your budget should include all the costs of delivering your project or idea. Take in to account the cost-of-living crisis we are facing and remember to include your capital expenditures (if any).

DID YOU KNOW?

It only takes 2 to 3 weeks from submitting application to the money being transferred into your bank for successful applicants.

RECAP

- Tell us how you know there is a clear need for your project. Does this come from your own experience – perhaps from a high demand for your services, your knowledge of your community, or recent community consultation?
- How are you connected to people in your community? Please tell us about your connections, partners and the other organisations you work with. What do people say? How will service users or beneficiaries influence the delivery of your project?
- Tell us what you will do to make sure everyone can access your project, particularly people who would benefit most.
- What monitoring and evaluation tools will you use to measure the difference your work will make?
- How do you plan to report the differences your project makes to us?

We will you every success and look forward to receiving your application!

THE OUTCOME OF APPLICATIONS IS DETERMINED BY THE REVIEW PANEL AND THEIR DECISION IS FINAL.

VASLAN HAS NO AUTHORITY TO OVERRIDE THIS DECISION, HOWEVER, YOU CAN RE-APPLY IF APPROPRIATE. FOR EXAMPLE, THE APPLICATION WAS UNSUCCESSFUL BECAUSE IT WAS UNCLEAR AND DID NOT PROVIDE ENOUGH INFORMATION.



SUPPORT FROM VASLAN

Did you know that we could provide you with additional support? As a Third Sector Interface, VASLan offer a range of support to all community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises in South Lanarkshire. Some of our services include:

Capacity Building Support

This includes, and is not limited to:

- Governance
- Risk assessments
- How to start up an organisation
- Mandatory training information
- Business planning
- Sustainability plans

Funding Support

This includes, and is not limited to:

- Funding searches specific to your organisation and project
- Support for completing applications
- Advice on VASLan managed funds and what funding we have available

Marketing Promotion

- We have our own Communications and Marketing team who are happy to visit your organisation and create your very own organisational spotlight video. This can then be promoted via our social media channels and you will receive a copy to keep.

Volunteer Support

- Do you make full use of the fantastic volunteers South Lanarkshire has to offer? VASLan can match opportunities with our database of volunteers, publicise volunteering at events, Employer Supported Volunteering to encourage private organisations to put a volunteering policy into their contracts so that their staff can volunteer.

Quality Standard Support

- We have funding and support available to help your organisation achieve Volunteer Quality Standard. Depending on the size of your organisation, you'll be required to go through Volunteer Friendly or Investing in Volunteers.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any further questions about the Employability Fund, or need support to make your application, please contact our Employability Network Co-ordinator.



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