

North East Lincolnshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Frequently Asked Questions

Who are the people/organisations working within NELC to manage the process ongoing?

A project team (including Maggie Johnson – Head of Economy and Funding) within the Economy and Growth Team at NELC.

What is invest NEL?

A useful website and source of information including business support, information about relocating to NEL, a property search tool and information about our key sectors.

Can small/medium sized charities, voluntary community organisations apply for funding?

Grants are available to any organisation which qualifies under the government definition of an 'enterprise'. This includes a sole trader, micro business, small and medium-sized enterprise, or large business. It also includes social enterprises where these engage in economic activity.

How often will projects be assessed?

The project team will assess expressions of interest, and we aim to respond at the Expression of Interest stage within 7 to 10 working days depending on the number of applications that we receive. If the team think that the project is likely to fit with the scheme, they will request that a full application is submitted for assessment. An invitation to submit an application does not guarantee that a grant will be awarded.

If an organisation has previously received funding through the Activation Fund, can we still apply for UK Shared Prosperity Funding?

Potentially yes, if the project activity is new and not one already being funded through the Activation Fund where outputs have already been assigned to that funding.

Can I apply for revenue for UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the creative fund?

An element of UK Shared Prosperity Fund is allocated to creative activities, and this is being delivered through the Grimsby Creates team. We would encourage those in the creative sector to discuss opportunities directly with the team at grimsbycreates@nelincs.gov.uk

Will projects need to last for 1 or 2 years?

We expect a mix, some may be to fund a specific activity for a set time, some may span over the 2-year period.

Would applications be better coming from several organisations submitted in collaboration?

We encouraged this within our Investment Plan, having organisations working together in collaboration would be well received.

Can grant funding be paid in advance to cover costs?

This might depend on the project, historically we have transferred grants for capital projects in arrears, but we can consider on a case-by-case basis.

Please clarify why the Community and Place element is not fully funded? Will we have to fund the remainder?

We are not able to offer 100% funding for projects. For revenue the maximum amount of the total cost we can fund is 75%. However, match for this does not have to be in the form of cash, it can be project sponsors time in developing the project, unpaid or donated specialist support time, use of office facilities, etc. For capital grants, the maximum is set at 40% of the total cost – we can be flexible on the capital element in exceptional circumstances if the project is likely to have a significant impact on a community or neighbourhood and any benefits/profits reinvested into the community.

Why is the capital fund different from revenue fund when it comes to the intervention rate, could this not be the same?

The capital fund intervention has been based on traditional funding rates and is lower because it funds a tangible asset which the enterprise owns or could increase the value of a property.

If we have indicated that we have secured match funding, will the council need to see confirmation?

Yes, we will need to see evidence that you have secured match funding, such as from a commercial lender or a grant award.

Can I apply for revenue and capital funding under both Community & Place and Supporting Local Business strands for a single project?

Potentially yes, if the deliverables of the scheme cross over both intervention priorities. The limits on funding remain the same though, so for instance if the scheme includes energy saving solutions, the limit of £10,000 remains the same and is not doubled.

Is this funding only available for new projects/ developments?

Projects which have already commenced cannot be supported. Further phases that are additional to the existing project may be considered if the deliverables meet with the eligibility criteria.

Why are the caps for capital funding not applied to revenue funding?

Capital funding is for one-off expenditure, and we have identified three priorities – building improvements, digital infrastructure, and energy saving solutions. Some of these projects could be very expensive, so there needs to be a maximum value set against each to allow for as many projects as possible to be supported. Revenue funding is likely to be smaller amounts and much more varied to assist with specialist support, running costs, etc and will be very project specific so difficult to put a cap on. Please refer to the guidance which we have updated with some suggestions on what to consider when applying for revenue funding.

Can we complete one expression of interest form even if we are applying for both capital/ revenue funding/ mixed streams?

Yes, but please ensure that you are clear within your application about how much you are applying for as capital or revenue funding as well as outlining the need for applying for both.

Can we include VAT in the cost?

If your organisation can reclaim the VAT, we will only consider the net value of the cost. If, however, you are not eligible to reclaim VAT we will consider the full cost of the project. You will need to inform us of this at Expression of Interest stage, we cannot include this retrospectively.

Can we apply for funding in both years at the same time?

If your project spans both financial years, we would recommend identifying this in your Expression of Interest and clearly setting out how the project is split across the two years. If successful, you will need to have completed the activities and claimed the funding as set out in the first year before being able to access the second year of funding.

We're looking at bringing a building back for a specific purpose. Can this include educational workshops/ skills?

Projects with deliverables that fit under the skills intervention can only be supported in year 3 of the programme (April 2024- March 2025). We ask that all expressions of interest for skills focussed activities are submitted no later than September 2023.

Can a business request funding to replace equipment?

There is not sufficient capital funding to support grants for equipment. We may choose to introduce wider capital schemes in year 3 (April 2024- March 2025) where there is a larger capital fund, depending on allocations made for the first priority interventions.

Is it one application per organisation?

No, not necessarily. This will depend on what the reasons are for multiple applications and decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, covering the need for separate applications.

What are the timescales for completing an expression of interest?

There is no set deadline for submitting a completed expression of interest form, so we will accept submissions throughout the year until all the funds have been committed. We are expecting a high level of interest though so would encourage projects to come forward as early as possible.

Once we have received an expression of interest form, you will then be able to proceed to making a full application.

How long will Expressions of Interests be open for?

Until all the funds are allocated in each financial year. Funds are allocated for specific activities until 1st September in each delivery year, at which time any funds unallocated will be opened up for any eligible projects on a waiting list. The only exception to this is the allocation for single decarbonisation projects which we expect will come forward over the course of the year. You can submit your expression of interest form to ppd-communityinvestment@nelincs.gov.uk

Are agricultural subsidies included in subsidy control requirements?

They may be included in subsidy control requirements in some parts of the UK, but as we have not received any agricultural subsidies for North East Lincolnshire this does not affect us.

Decarbonisation, what does this entail?

This is outlined in the outputs and definitions document however, if your project can be delivered before the end of March 2023, we would encourage you to look at the Smarter Energy NEL scheme to see if you are eligible for support. [Smarter Energy NEL - E-Factor Business](#)

State Aid /De minimis– who is responsible when it comes to declaring info on de minimis the funder or the business?

State Aid and De minimis have been replaced with new Subsidy Control rules which came into effect in January 2023. We expect that most grants will be awarded under Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA), and grant recipients will be required to sign a declaration form to evidence that they have not exceeded the maximum threshold of £315,000 of financial assistance in the three-year period covering the current year plus 2 previous years. Any Covid-19 business support grants received by an organisation are not included in this calculation and were subject to their own Subsidy Control regulations. Further details on Subsidy Control will be published once we have clarification on exemptions.

Please see link below if you are interested in signing up to be on our Invest NEL mailing list

<https://invest.questionpro.eu/>