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South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership

**LEVELLING
— UP —**



UK Shared Prosperity and Rural Prosperity Funding Prospectus

A document providing guidance to organisations wishing to bid for **UK Shared Prosperity** and **Rural Prosperity Funding**

Purpose of the Bidding Prospectus

The bidding prospectus explains how organisations operating within the three local authority geographies of Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland can apply for grant funding to support projects within the South East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) area.

This document provides some background information about the funding that is available; including how it can be spent, the outcomes that we are looking to achieve and the types of activity that may be supported.

It details how individual organisations can make a *Direct* application for grant funding and sets out some principles around grant values, matched funding and how SELCP aims to assess both the need and value of projects alongside a bidding organisation's capacity to deliver them.

In addition to organisations submitting applications for individual project funding we welcome proposals from organisations who feel they can assess and manage a portfolio of related activities on our behalf, under what we are calling *Delegated Authority*.

In the case of *Delegated Authority*, we aim to build relationships with organisations that have both experience in managing grant programmes and technical expertise in tackling specific issues or supporting key groups within our economy.

By adopting both a Direct and a Delegated award model we believe we can maximise the impact of the funding that's available; calling on expertise that exists to minimise duplication and add value to projects that are already succeeding.

Section 1 – Available Funding

1.1 Where is the Funding Coming From?

Each of the three local authorities; Boston, East Lindsey and South Holland have been awarded two sources of funding; UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) and Rural Prosperity Funding (RPF).

1.2 UK Shared Prosperity Funding in a Nutshell

UKSPF is a central pillar of the UK government’s ambitious levelling up agenda. In total £2.6 billion of new funding is being allocated across the entire UK to support local priorities, building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training and increasing life chances through supporting business growth, productivity and employment.

Ultimately it will lead to visible, tangible improvements to the places where people work and live by supporting local priorities and targeting investments where they have the greatest impact.

The funding will be contractually administered by Local Authorities and can be used to support both Capital and Revenue projects.

It must, however, be fully spent by 31st March 2025.

Underneath the overarching aim of *Building Pride in Place* and *Increasing Life Chances* three UKSPF investment priorities have been set; Community & Place, Supporting Local Business and People & Skills.



We will use these three Investment Priorities to categorise projects, manage our budgets and report on progress.

1.3 Rural Prosperity Funding in a nutshell

RPF is a top-up to the UKSPF budget, replacing an EU funded programme called LEADER.

Its focus is on addressing the challenges faced by rural areas, aiming to increase productivity and strengthen rural economies and communities.

Like UKSPF, the Rural fund supports the aim of the government's Levelling-Up agenda, but unlike UKSPF it has no Revenue funding element.

Instead, it focuses solely on supporting Capital projects within small businesses and Capital community infrastructure projects.

It too has investment priorities, namely, supporting new and existing rural businesses to develop and supporting new and improved community infrastructure to benefit local businesses and residents.

All Rural funding must also be fully spent by 31st March 2025.



Rural Prosperity Funding is not available to every Local Authority in the UK, as it is limited to areas defined as Rural.

Within East Lindsey, Boston and South Holland Rural Prosperity Funding can only be invested in settlements with under a 10,000 population and within Market Hub Towns with populations of under 30,000 that serve their surrounding rural areas as centres of employment. (namely Louth, Mablethorpe and Skegness.)

We will explain more about how projects can apply for funding under each of the UKSPF and RPF Investment Priorities later in the document.

1.4 How much money has been secured?

Overall, the Partnership area has secured £12.15m (£9.32 million of UKSPF and an additional award £2.83 million of RPF).

By Local Authority area it is broken down as follows:

District	UKSPF	RPF	Total
East Lindsey	£4.44m	£1.7m	£6.14m
South Holland	£2.69m	£0.7m	£3.39m
Boston	£2.19m	£0.43m	£2.62m
Total	£9.32m	£2.83m	£12.15m

The funding is ring-fenced for each Council area but it is possible for projects to run across several Local Authority areas, so organisations should not feel limited if their projects benefit from being delivered across a larger area.

1.4.1 How much is available to support Revenue Project expenditure?

- 80% of our UKSPF budget comes in the form of Revenue funding, equating to £7.45m.

1.4.2 How much is available to support Capital Project expenditure?

- 20% of UKSPF funding is to support Capital project investments, equating to £1.86m.
- 100% of the Rural Prosperity Fund is to support Capital projects, equating to £2.83m

1.4.3 When can the money be accessed?

Currently the split by financial years is as follows:

District	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
East Lindsey UKSPF	£539k	£1,077k	£2,822k	£4.44m
East Lindsey RP	£0	£800k	£900k	£1.7m
Boston UKSPF	£266k	£533k	£1,395k	£2.19m
Boston RP	£0	£200k	£203k	£0.43m
South Holland UKSPF	£327k	£654k	£1,712k	£2.69m
South Holland RP	£0	£350k	£350k	£0.7m
Total	£1.13m	£3.61mm	£7.38m	£12.15m

Because we have budgets to spend this financial year (before April 2023) it is important that we identify those projects that are in a position to start immediately and able to deliver within the first quarter of 2023.

To ensure budgets are fully committed and outcomes achieved our immediate priority will be to assess and approve projects that can spend and deliver in year 1.

1.5 What can the money be used for?

The UKSPF allocation needs to be invested in one or more of the three Investment Priorities, or “Themes”:

- 1.** Communities & Place - enabling places to invest to restore their community spaces and create the foundations for economic development growth at the neighbourhood-level. The intention of this is to strengthen the social fabric of communities, building pride in place.
- 2.** Supporting Local Business - enabling places to fund interventions that support local businesses to thrive, innovate and grow.
- 3.** People & Skills - helping to reduce the barriers some people face in finding work. Funding can also be targeted at skills development to support employment and growth.

The RPF allocation needs to be invested in one or both of its two Investment Priorities, or “Themes”:

- 1.** Supporting new and existing rural businesses to develop – supporting the development of new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams
- 2.** Supporting new and improved community infrastructure to benefit local businesses and residents - providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy.

1.6 Key Outcomes to be Delivered

To secure the funding each Local Authority had to submit an Investment Plan detailing the types of Project Activity they envisage being delivered alongside the Outcomes that they believe could be achieved over the life of the Programme.

It is these Outcomes that successful Project Applicants need to contribute towards, so an early indication of the impact organisations are looking to achieve will help us decide which projects to support.

As projects are assessed at the Full Application stage the Investment Panel will need to be confident that the proposed Activity and Outcomes are both achievable and represent value for money.

However, at the Expression of Interest (Eoi) stage we just need a brief Project outline along with an indication of the types of Outcomes likely to be delivered.

This will allow the Team assessing the Eois to identify projects that contribute positively to the overall objective and pass them through to the next stage of the Application Process.

Organisations submitting Eois will be asked to identify, from the tables below, the Outcomes which they believe will be delivered by their Project.

Table 2.1

Community & Place - Desired Outcomes
Jobs Created
Jobs Safeguarded
Increased Footfall
Increased Visitor Numbers
Improved Engagement Numbers
Reduced Vacancy Rates
Improved Perception/Experienced accessibility
Improved Perception of Facilities/Amenities
Increased Users of Facilities/Amenities
Increased Affordability of Events/Entry
Improved Perception of Events
Increased Perception of Safety
Reduced Neighbourhood crime
Increased Web Searches for a Place
Increased Volunteer Numbers
Greenhouse Gas Reductions
Number of Community Led Arts, heritage and creative programmes

Table 2.2

Supporting Local Business - Desired Outcomes
Jobs Created
Jobs Safeguarded
New Businesses Created
Increased Investment
Increased Visitor Spending
Reduced Vacancy Rates
Improved Perception of Markets
Improved Perception of Attractions
Increased Business Sustainability
Number of Businesses Supported
Businesses with improved Productivity
Organisations involved in knowledge transfer
Businesses active in R&D
Businesses introducing new to market products
Businesses engaged in new markets
Number of Business introducing new technologies or processes
Early-stage Businesses increasing Turnover
Businesses increasing Export capacity
Number of Premises with improved digital connectivity
Low or zero carbon infrastructure installed
Greenhouse Gas Reductions
Number of Projects Arising from Feasibility Studies

Table 2.3

People & Skills – Desired Outcomes
Number of Economically Inactive individuals in receipt of Benefits entitled to follow up support
Number of Active of Sustained participants in community groups as a result of support
People reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills
Number of People in Supported employment
Number of People engaging in mainstream healthcare services
Number of People in employment (inc Self Employment) as a result of the Support
Number of People engaged in Job Searching as a result of the Support
Number of People sustaining engagement with Keyworker support & additional services
Number of People sustaining employment for 6 months
Number of People in Education/Training
Number of People experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and skills provision
Numbers of People familiarised with Employer Expectations
Number of People completing a course as a result of the Support
Number of People gaining a Qualifications, Licenses and skills as a result of the Support
Number of economically active People engaged in mainstream skills education & training
Number of People engaged in life skills support following interventions

Note - Funding for People & Skills Projects is only available for 1 year and cannot be accessed until 1st April 2024.

1.7 Project Activity (“Strands”) & Local Priorities identified during Consultation

1.7.1 Communities & Place

If you have a project you want us to consider under the Communities & Place theme, please be aware that we will be looking for you to demonstrate how you will deliver outputs and outcomes in one or more of the 10 Project Strands:

E1: Projects that improve our town centres & high streets
E2: Community & neighbourhood projects which support groups of people
E4: Projects that enhance our existing cultural, historical & heritage offer
E6: Projects that develop new local arts, cultural, heritage activities
E8: Campaigns to encourage visitor to explore our local area
E9: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects
E11: Capacity building projects for local groups
E12: Projects that focus on local regeneration, engaging the wider Community
E13: Community projects aimed at reducing the cost of living
E15: Projects that improve Digital connectivity in local community facilities

South Holland District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 10 strands above but is particularly interested to see:

1. Projects which build the residential desirability of the area, drawing wider attention to its history, heritage and assets.
2. Projects which bring imaginative new activities and adapt buildings to breathe new life into town centres.
3. Programmes for smaller places which will improve and widen the use of community buildings including village halls.
4. Projects which build on the visitor offer of the South Holland area.
5. A Grant scheme that delivers direct support to organisations - schools, public sector, charities and businesses - who wish to deliver arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.
6. Projects that enhance the community transport infrastructure.

Boston District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 10 strands above but is particularly interested to see:

1. Projects that develop and promote Boston's cluster of world-class Heritage assets.
2. Projects that address the ongoing challenge of integration and inclusion arising from Boston's high stock of migrant workers.
3. Projects that refurbish and bring life back to the High Street.
4. Programmes for smaller places which will improve and widen the use of community buildings including village halls.
5. A Grant scheme that delivers direct support to organisations - schools, public sector, charities and businesses - who wish to deliver arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.
6. Projects that enhance the community transport infrastructure.

East Lindsey District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 10 strands above but is particularly interested to see:

1. Projects which support key assets in our market towns and enhance their economic usage.
2. Projects which capitalise on the Lincolnshire Wolds as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, providing further assets to exploit positively in terms of the visitor economy.
3. Projects which capitalise on East Lindsey achieving priority status from the Arts Council England.
4. Projects which Strengthen the Hospitality & Tourism Offer across the District, with a particular focus on Coastal Resort Towns.
5. Projects which further promote and capitalise on a number of distinctive marketplaces and valued heritage assets.
6. A Grant scheme that delivers direct support to organisations - schools, public sector, charities and businesses - who wish to deliver arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.
7. Programmes for smaller places which will improve and widen the use of community buildings including village halls.
8. Projects that enhance the community transport infrastructure.

1.7.2 Supporting Local Business

If you have a project you want us to consider under the Supporting Local Business theme, please be aware that we will be looking for you to demonstrate how you will deliver outputs and outcomes in one or more of the 15 Project strands:

E16: Projects that support our open markets & town centre retail & service sectors
E17: Projects that develop & promote our visitor economy
E18: Projects that provide advice for manufacturing and technical businesses
E19: Projects that stimulate investment in research & development at a local level
E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development
E21: Support to develop innovative infrastructure at a local level
E22: Projects that support the development of Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites
E23: Activity that strengthens local entrepreneurial ecosystems
E24: The Development of Training hubs, business support offers, incubators & accelerators
E25: Projects that facilitate the hosting of international business events & conferences
E26: Projects that Grow the Local Social Economy – creating & supporting businesses with a social purpose
E27: Development of Angel Investor Networks
E28: Grants to grow overseas trading and export activity.
E29: Projects that support decarbonisation & the improvement of our natural environment
E30: Business support that helps create jobs.

South Holland District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 15 strands (E16-E30) above but is particularly interested to see:

1. A Grant Programme with built in Advisory support that helps local businesses invest for future growth.
2. Projects that further develop and grow the food processing, horticulture and logistics sectors, creating new business starts and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of businesses within these key employment sectors.
3. Projects that encourage business start-up activity.
4. Programmes to help the local Social Economy to Innovate & Grow.

Boston District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 15 strands (E16-E30) above but is particularly interested to see projects that will deliver across the following areas:

1. A Grant Programme with built in Advisory support that helps local businesses invest for future growth.
2. Projects that help Boston to diversify its economy; encouraging the development of high value enterprises whilst continuing to exploit its food wholesale and processing strengths.
3. Projects that help improve productivity by encouraging investment in new technologies and high value employment.
4. Projects that address Boston's low level of business start-up activity.
5. Programmes to help the local Social Economy to Innovate, Grow and develop sustainable new routes to employment for vulnerable and low skilled individuals.

East Lindsey District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 15 strands (E16-E30) above but is particularly interested to see projects that will deliver across the following areas:

1. A Grant Programme with built in Advisory support that helps local businesses invest for future growth, with particular emphasis on the Visitor Economy.
2. Projects that encourage business start-up activity.
3. Programmes to help the local Social Economy to Innovate & Grow.

1.7.3 People & Skills

Note - Funding for People & Skills Projects is only available for 1 year and cannot be accessed until 1st April 2024 (Unless your project is currently funded through ESF).

If you have a project you want us to consider under the People & Skills theme, please be aware that we will be looking for you to demonstrate how you will deliver outputs and outcomes in one or more of the 7 Project Strands:

E33: Employment support for economically inactive people (not currently participating in the workforce)
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills
E35: Projects that enrich lives and develop volunteering opportunities
E36: Projects that increase levels of digital inclusion by developing essential digital skills
E37: Projects that provide tailored support for the employed to access training & development courses
E38: Projects that address specific local skills needs and shortages
E41: Funding to support local digital skills

Currently the entire People & Skills budget, to be spent in 2024/25, is Revenue funding.

South Holland District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 7 strands above but is particularly interested to see projects that will deliver across the following areas:

1. Projects that develop skills and employment opportunities within the Fresh Food, Food Processing and Logistics Sectors.
2. Projects that provide remote learning opportunities, engaging learners in new opportunities for personal and economic development.
3. Projects that look to utilise redundant community buildings as Training Hubs to serve hard-to-reach communities.
4. Projects that build on the expertise and capacity of established providers and Social Enterprises to upskill local employees and residents.

Boston District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 7 strands above but is particularly interested to see projects that will deliver across the following areas:

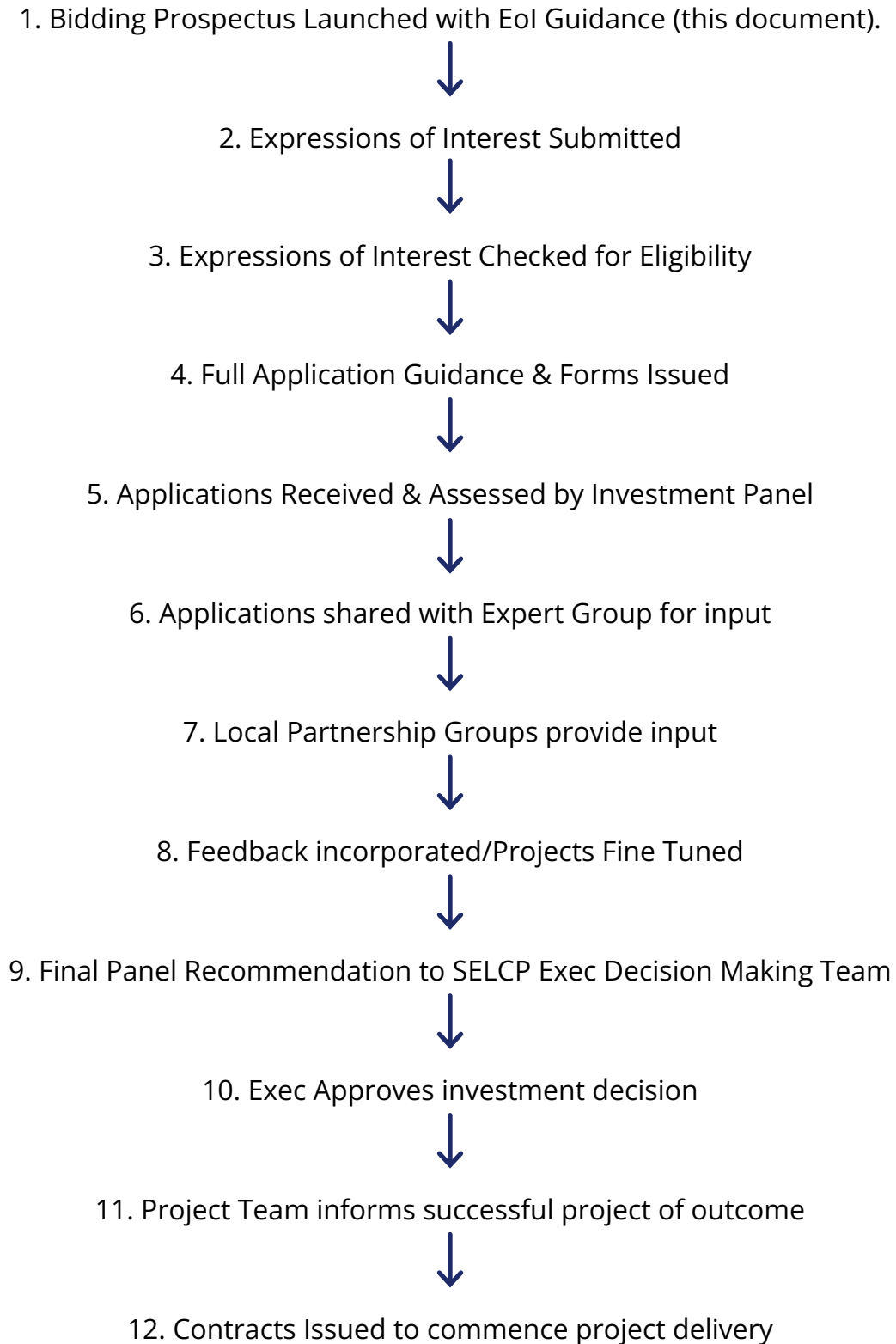
1. Projects that support Social Enterprises to deliver training and development in the community.
2. Projects that look at innovative ways of engaging both the migrant population and the over 65's in training and development activity.

East Lindsey District is looking to encourage projects that delivers against any one of the 7 strands above but is particularly interested to see projects that will deliver across the following areas:

1. Projects that focus on the training & development needs of the Visitor economy & Tourism Sector.
2. Projects that support Social Enterprises and Sporting Organisations to deliver training and development in the community.
3. Projects that look to tiles redundant community buildings as Training Hubs to serve hard-to-reach communities.

Section 2 - How to Apply for Funding

2.1 The Application & Approval Process



2.2 Who can apply for funding?

Access to grant funding is via an application form and the process is a competitive one.

Any organisation with a legal status can apply for funding to deliver a project. This includes:

- Private sector companies
- Voluntary organisations
- Registered charities
- Higher and Further education institutions
- Public sector organisations and
- Local Authorities

However:

- Organisations that are Insolvent, in the process of being struck off or classified as being an '*undertaking in difficulty*' cannot apply for grant funding.
- Organisations already exceeding Subsidy Control thresholds will be ineligible for Grant funding.

2.3 Is there any activity or project expenditure that is ineligible?

Grant funding can support both capital and revenue expenditure so in principle all costs associated with the design, development and delivery of a project are eligible and will be considered.

However, there are some costs which we will rule ineligible. These include:

- funding for anything that has already been ordered, contractually committed or paid for (including deposit payments)
- any none project specific Working Capital
- statutory or legal obligations
- debt repayments
- statutory fines, criminal fines or penalties
- bad debts, costs resulting from the deferral of payments to creditors, or winding up a company
- VAT reclaimable from HMRC
- payments for activities of a party political or exclusively religious nature
- gifts, or payments for gifts or donations
- paid for lobbying, entertaining, petitioning or challenging decisions
- contingencies and contingent liabilities
- dividends
- expenses in respect of litigation, unfair dismissal or other compensation
- payments for works or activities which the lead local authority, project deliverer, end beneficiary, or any member of their partnership has a statutory duty to undertake, or that are fully funded by other sources
- costs incurred by individuals in setting up and contributing towards private pension schemes

2.4 What's the maximum level of grant that is available?

There is no maximum grant an organisation can apply for.

2.5 What's the minimum level of grant that is available?

The minimum grant individual grant award will be is £5,000. Delegated Authorities may however set their minimum grant award at a lower level.

2.6 How is VAT accounted for within the grant?

If an organisation is registered for VAT, they cannot claim the VAT element of any expenditure. For example, if they are spending £60,000 (purchasing a machine for £50,000 + VAT) they can only claim against the £50,000 net cost.

If an organisation is not VAT registered, they are entitled to claim against the gross cost. In the above example the full £60,000 would be treated as the eligible cost.

2.7 Can I apply for funding to carry out a feasibility study if my idea still needs some further development?

Yes. We expect to see a number of feasibility projects coming forward to test out new and innovative ideas. Especially in the first financial year.

Submitting a grant application to help fund a feasibility study does not disqualify the same organisation from then submitting a further application to fund the full project delivery should the feasibility study prove successful.

2.8 Do you welcome Partnership working?

Absolutely.

We want to encourage the development of bids which build on local potential and existing best practice.

We are keen therefore that you think hard about local partnership opportunities and the scope to build on the good things which are already happening.

We recognise the importance of partnership working and understand how partner organisations can complement each other, especially within large, complex projects.

It is important however to have a Lead Partner with overall contractual responsibility for delivering the outputs on time and to budget.

2.9 We are thinking of submitting a bid to become a Delegated Authority but are not sure what this entails?

If you are either an expert in your field or feel you can effectively represent a group or sector, then the Delegated Authority route maybe the best way forward for you.

It entails submitting an EoI to run an area of activity with a discrete budget and the autonomy to make investment decision on our behalf.

You will need to demonstrate a genuine understanding and level of expertise in the area you are looking to lead on and how you add value to the Grant Award process. Real experience in Project and Contract Management will also be a prerequisite.

For example:

An organisation with experience managing Cultural or Heritage projects may wish to be considered as a Delegated Authority to help design, develop and deliver activity in these areas.

The organisation would submit an EoI stating their interest, perhaps directly delivering a few projects themselves whilst at the same time overseeing other organisations who are also interested in bidding into a Cultural & Heritage Development Pot.

If successful the organisation would be given a contract to assess projects, subcontract for delivery and oversee project performance. They would manage a discrete grant budget and be responsible for ensuring outputs and outcomes are developed on time and to budget.

The cost of helping to administer the Delegated fund would need to be set out in their full application and agreed prior to contracting.

2.10 Can I bid for activity across more than one District Authority area?

Yes.

Again, we welcome this particular approach where organisations feel the issues are more general and applicable to a wider geographical area. For example, an approach to support the Business Start Up agenda or the needs of the Tourism sector across the Partnership area.

Smaller projects however, benefiting a discrete local community or specific high street location, are likely to be focused within one District Authority area.

2.11 What percentage of total eligible costs can be covered by the grant?

The Investment Panel (and Delegated Authorities) can make grant awards between 10% and 100% of eligible project costs.

It is possible in exceptional circumstances, where UKSPF is seen as the only funding available for the project, for 100% grant funding to be approved.

The final Grant offer percentage will be set by the Investment Panel having taken into account the project's funding requirements, its proposed deliverable outputs and the demand from competing projects seeking funding.

2.12 How important is matched funding?

To maximise the value for money and impact of the funding we are looking for Applicants to lever-in additional investment, especially in Community & Place and Supporting Local Business projects.

Matched funding can come in the form of hard cash or as in-kind support, provided to cover running costs such as salaries or office administration.

Larger projects will be asked to present detailed financial plans showing what steps have been taken to attract either Public, Private or third Sector matched funding.

Applicants are expected, as part of their application, to have investigated and actively sought other sources of matched funding.

Failure to attempt to secure other funding is likely to result in the application being rejected.

2.13 Do I need to submit different applications for UKSPF and Rural projects?

No, you don't need to worry about that.

Just tell us what you are looking to achieve, where, when and with who and we will identify the best funding option for your project.

It is our challenge to manage the available funds in such a way as to maximise their impact and make the application and claims process as simple as possible.

2.14 Will you consider projects that are already running?

Yes.

We want to capitalise on known successes so will consider supporting activity that has proved to add value.

However, we are looking for additionality so won't simply displace your own existing or committed funding. It's more about helping you to develop your project by deliver more or expanding its reach.

2.15 My Project is just at the concept/ideas stage. Is it too early to apply for funding?

It may be, depending on how realistic it is for you to design, develop and deliver meaningful outcomes within the timescales.

However, we are interested in supporting pilots or feasibility studies that test ideas and concepts in readiness for future funding rounds.

2.16 How will Eols be assessed & how long before I get feedback?

Expressions of Interest help us to identify possible projects and allow us to plan a complete and cohesive delivery model.

The amount of information that we will ask for at this early stage will be the minimum we need to assess whether your project idea is eligible.

The Grant Administration Team will check the eligibility of both the Applicant and the proposed project.

Priority in the short term will be given to assessing projects that can deliver this financial year but we do hope to review Eols within 2/3 weeks and either invite full Applications or provide feedback to those unsuccessful.

We do however expect a lot of interest once we launch the Prospectus so are asking Applicants to be patient whilst we review incoming Eols.

2.17 What information will I be expected to submit as part of my Application?

Organisations submitting eligible Eols will be invited to work up a full application providing more detail about the proposed project - how it will operate in practice, what it will deliver in terms of Outcomes & Outputs, how it will be managed, what it will cost and when it will be completed.

Detailed guidance and FAQs will be issued with the Application Form and bidding organisations will have access to on-going support and advice.

To support the assessment the Investment Panel (and Delegated Authorities) will require certain information, likely to include:

- Three years of Financial Accounts or Business Plans & Management Accounts if the bidding organisation is less than 3 years old.
- 3 quotes for each eligible expenditure item (depending on value)
- Completed Subsidy Control and Procurement Compliance statements
- Organisation Equality and Environmental Policy Statements
- Other documentation where relevant (planning permission, proof of matched funding, Partnership agreements etc)

2.18 Will you want references or letter of endorsement to support my application?

Not as standard but if you think it strengthens your case then include them.

It may be particularly relevant where you can showcase past successes working on similar activity or where you have built up a good reputation for managing complex/timebound projects.

2.19 How will applications be assessed?

A number of people will be involved in assessing applications.

The Investment Panel, led by the Senior Programme Manager, will review applications alongside supporting financial information, references, quotations etc.

A view will be taken on how the project contributes towards the Programme's objective and the organisation's capacity and delivery experience.

A summary of each project will be shared with both the Local Partnership Group and the "Expert" Theme Group to ensure that it fits strategically, adds to the local mix of activity and capitalises on existing expertise and knowledge.

Once feedback has been received from the two groups the Investment Panel will reconvene to discuss the final recommendation, agree an appropriate percentage award and any grant conditions or special payment terms.

2.20 Working through Local Partnership & Expert Theme Groups

Projects will be shared with both "Expert" Themed Groups and Local Partnership Groups to ensure what is being proposed fits strategically, adds value, avoids duplication and accesses other funding streams where appropriate.

The "Expert" Themed Groups and Local Partnership Groups are not decision-making groups, but their input is key and will influence the final recommendation being worked up by the Senior Programme Manager and the Investment Panel.

Members of the "Expert" Themed Groups and Local Partnership Groups can submit Eols to delivery projects themselves but will obviously need to declare an interest and not actively Champion or lobby for their own projects.

2.21 Once I've submitted my full applications how long before I get a decision?

If the application and all the supporting information is submitted correctly, we would expect the Investment Panel to review your project within 2 or 3 weeks, as we intend to run bi-monthly panel meetings.

We will however need to take on board the feedback from the two advisory groups and potentially discuss amendments or conditions, which can take time.

In total we aim to turn around grant award decisions within a month to 6 weeks.

2.22 Are small projects assessed and managed differently to larger ones?

Initially all grant requests for under £25,000 will be assessed by the central Investment Team whilst we set up Delegated Authorities to manage smaller awards on our behalf.

Once Delegated Authorities are under contract we will look to channel requests for under £25,000 through them where possible.

The paperwork used to submit EoIs and full applications will be the same for all projects regardless of size, as will the criteria against which they are assessed; ensuring that decision making process remains consistent.

Larger or higher risk projects will be scrutinised in much more detail to assess delivery capacity and management experience.

Some projects may also be invited to present to the Investment Panel, the "Expert" Themed Group or the Local Partnership Group at the discretion of the Senior Programme Manager running the assessment process.

2.23 How will we pay grants once they've been approved?

The standard practice will be for grants to be paid in arrears once expenditure has been incurred and payment made in full.

As a general rule, smaller grants will be paid out as a single payment once bank statements, showing that invoices have been paid, have been checked by the Administration Team.

Organisations will need to pay for their purchases from their Business/Organisational Bank Account before claiming the money back from the council. (Purchases through Personal Credit Cards will be deemed ineligible)

Where the grant relates to a capital expense, evidence that the asset is based within the District will be required.

Larger grants may be paid against an agreed schedule but again only upon proof that the agreed expenditure has been incurred and that the asset or service has been delivered.

In exceptional circumstances an agreement may be reached whereby the whole grant, or an element of the grant, can be paid in advance of expenditure being incurred.

Where grant recipients request special payment terms the Investment Panel will carry out a Risk Assessment taking into account the amount being claimed and the financial health of the organisation.

Assuming we have all the necessary evidence and organisational bank details, grants will be paid out promptly to minimize cashflow pressure.

2.24 Do I have to comply with any procurement rules or regulations?

Yes. As a recipient of grant funding you will be expected to comply with central Government regulations:

- If the value of individual items being purchased (both Capital or Revenue) is less than £2,499 (net of VAT) then you may place a direct award. (i.e. no need to secure multiple quotes)
- If the value of individual items being purchased (both Capital or Revenue) is between £2,500 and £24,999 (net of VAT) then you must request and supply 3 written quotes from relevant suppliers of goods, works and/or services.
- If the value of individual items being purchased (both Capital or Revenue) is greater than £25,000 (net of VAT) then you must run a formal tender process

Delegated Authorities managing contracts on behalf of SELCP must ensure that organisations contracted to them are also managing procurement compliantly.

2.25 What is Subsidy Control and does it affect me?

In most cases, UKSPF or Rural subsidies will not take recipients beyond the subsidy thresholds set by the UK government.

Unless a Grant recipient receives in excess of £315,000 (when adding their award to any grant aid they've received within the current financial year or the previous two there is unlikely to be a need to classify or justify the support being offered and to comply with the majority of subsidy control measures as contained in the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

We will however, as a matter of course, need to ask Grant Applicants the value of any recent previous support to eliminate any risk of non-compliance and to determine if the Grant can be considered as Minimal Financial Assistance under the Act.

2.26 Is my grant contract binding?

Contracts will detail the value of the grant against specific items of expenditure.

If organisations claim for expenditure that has not been agreed then that element of the grant will not be paid.

Similarly, any expenditure that pre-dates the formal grant award offer letter is entirely at the applicant's own risk and will be deemed as ineligible expenditure for grant assistance.

Organisations failing to deliver the outcomes and outputs detailed within their contract will be asked to present remedial plans and work with the Investment Team (or Delegated

Authority) to get their project back on track.

Larger, more complex projects will be monitored closely to ensure that key milestones are achieved and risks mitigated. Regular project management meetings may be necessary if there are issues with delivery.

Contracts will also set out reporting obligations to ensure we track and capture outputs and expenditure information. It is likely that Grant Recipients will have to submit Monitoring & Evaluation reports quarterly.

2.27 Use of organisational & personal information

Information submitted by organisations applying for grant funding may be shared with partner organisations to support marketing activity, to assess impact and to undertake independent programme evaluations.

Information provided to the Council will be disclosable to Government offices such as DHLUC and the Cabinet Office.

The Councils are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – and as such may be compelled to release details of applicants expressions of interest – personal details will be redacted. Business financial details will also be redacted for up to 2 years after the application period, but then potentially become disclosable.

Where there is a specific “commercial sensitivity” to expressions of interest or applications please make the Council aware at the time of application.

More information on Privacy Notices can be found at:

South Holland: www.sholland.gov.uk/privacy

East Lindsey: www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/privacy

Boston Borough: www.boston.gov.uk/privacy

2.28 Completing & Submitting your Eol

The Eol form for your area can be found at:

www.sholland.gov.uk/UKSPF

www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/UKSPF

www.boston.gov.uk/UKSPF

It is in a PDF format and can be downloaded, saved to your device and completed before you email it, as an attachment, back to us at UKSPF@sholland.gov.uk

Please note: When opening the attachment on a Mac or Macbook, make sure you are using an Adobe Acrobat programme to fill in your Expression of Interest form. You can do this by right clicking on the file and selecting ‘Open with’ on the drop down. Click on ‘Adobe Acrobat’ to open the file.

If you are having difficulties submitting the Eol using the PDF version please email us at UKSPF@sholland.gov.uk and we can forward a word document for you to complete.