

Guidance Note

Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

Funding Round 2 March 2024– Supporting Rural Communities

<p>What is the UKSPF Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)?</p>	<p>The Rural England Prosperity Fund (the Rural Fund) is part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) which supports productivity and prosperity in places that need it most. It is complementary to funding used to support rural areas under the UKSPF.</p> <p>The Rural Fund provides support for rural areas in Redcar and Cleveland to provide small scale capital funding to Rural Communities for capital grants for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.</p>
<p>How much is available for this funding round?</p>	<p>The Rural Fund allocation for this funding round is £134,053.</p> <p>This will provide funding to community organisations to fund capital grants for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.</p>
<p>How much funding can I apply for?</p>	<p>Grant applications between £3k and £15k of capital funding will be considered.</p>
<p>Who can apply for funding?</p>	<p>The fund will be open for eligible applicants to apply for small capital grants.</p> <p>Eligible areas for the Rural England Prosperity Fund can be identified using the Defra ‘Magic Maps’ tool https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx</p> <p>Please note: the administrative boundaries for the Rural England Prosperity Fund are defined and set by Defra (the government Department for environment, food and rural affairs).</p> <p>Eligible community organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only projects taking place in locations defined as rural will be considered. ▪ Applications can be submitted from small organisations (including social enterprises and co-operatives) planning a capital-related



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> investment in an eligible rural area. ▪ Be a new community start-up or an existing business. ▪ Postcode checks to confirm project eligibility MUST be completed by applicant prior to completion of the application form - https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx ▪ Have fewer than 50 employees (FTEs) ▪ The proposed investment/project will take place solely in an eligible rural area. ▪ Be able to fund the balance of any wider costs (where applicable) ▪ Demonstrate the financial and commercial viability of the project (where applicable) and the need for grant support. ▪ New and established community services <p>You will not be eligible to apply for funding for projects that are already receiving grant funding from other Defra schemes.</p> <p>You will not be eligible to apply for grant funding for any project work that has already started or has been completed.</p>						
<p>How and when can I apply for funding?</p>	<p>Key dates for the Rural England Prosperity Fund – Funding Round 2 are as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="488 1086 1445 1220"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Application window opens</th> <th>Application window closes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Funding Round 2</td> <td>Tuesday 12-March-2024</td> <td>Tuesday 02-April-2024 (5pm)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>An online application form will be available so apply for funding. Applications must be made using this online form. An offline form can be used for drafting purposes. The application forms can be found here.</p> <p><i>*Please Note: Subject to the volume and value of eligible applications received and approved, funding may be fully committed through Funding Round 2. Therefore, we will only provide an update on any plans to launch future funding rounds once the assessment and scoring process for Funding Round 2 has been completed.</i></p>		Application window opens	Application window closes	Funding Round 2	Tuesday 12-March-2024	Tuesday 02-April-2024 (5pm)
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<p>What can I use the grant for?</p>	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding for provision of maker spaces. ▪ Funding for local art galleries, museums and libraries for altering premises or providing spaces for exhibitions to support displays for artists to showcase work. ▪ Capital grants to enable cultural, heritage and creative events and provision of venues for locally-led: music and theatre performances; tours; author events; film screenings. 						



<p>What can the grant not be used for?</p>	<p>Projects that have already received funding from other Defra schemes. This includes, but is not restricted to; The Farming Investment Fund, the Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund, or the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme.</p>
<p>What is the process for assessing my application?</p>	<p>The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a competitive process.</p> <p>Assessment and scoring of applications will be undertaken by the grant panel.</p> <p>The grant panel will consist of Tees Valley Combined Authority, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council, Tees Valley Rural Action and Federation of Small Businesses with oversight from the Tees Valley Business Board.</p> <p>Eligible applications will be assessed and scored using a set scoring matrix based on the eligibility criteria and responses in the application process. Your application will also be assessed on how it contributes to the scheme's objectives and outcomes, how you are supporting the local economy and/or the drive to net zero.</p> <p>Please be aware that full compliance with the eligibility criteria does not automatically guarantee that your application will be successful, as grants are discretionary. If the Grant Panel are not fully satisfied that a submission is legitimate or provides value for money, we retain the right to decline the application.</p>
<p>How quickly will I know the outcome of my grant application?</p>	<p>Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application w/c 12th May 2024.</p> <p>Robust company due diligence checks will be completed by the Performance, Risk and Assurance Team at TVCA. Additional checks maybe carried out that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Authenticating the personal identities of persons with significant control and carrying out a financial/fraud risk assessment. ▪ Carrying out a general risk assessment of the organisation using Experian and Companies House records. ▪ Carrying out a financial viability assessment of each organisation using their accounts together with Experian and Companies House records. ▪ Carrying out a reputational risk assessment of each applicant. ▪ Validating grantees' bank accounts using Experian and/or CreditSafe. <p>We may request additional documentation to complete these checks such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of existing bank account ▪ Details of any person who has control of the organisation including



	<p>the completion of a 'fit and proper person' declaration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business plan ▪ Financial accounts/statements ▪ Project plan ▪ Quotes for the proposed investment(s) that grant support is being requested towards (we encourage the use of local suppliers where possible and your chosen supplier cannot be linked to your business in any way.
How will I receive the funding?	If your application is successful and due diligence checks are satisfactory, TVCA will issue a grant funding agreement which will include details of how you will receive the grant funds. The agreement will also include details of how your project performance will be captured and monitored.
How do I claim the grant?	<p>The grant recipient must purchase the capital equipment and then funds are claimed in arrears.</p> <p>Evidence that needs to be submitted includes an invoice for proof of purchase and proof of payment to the supplier which could be a bank statement showing the transaction 7 days before and 7 days after the purchase.</p> <p>A site visit may also be required to see the completed works, or you may be asked to provide photographic evidence.</p> <p>In exceptional circumstances, consideration of an alternative funding release approach may be given to those organisations who do not have the cash flow to make the initial investment.</p>
Indicative Outcomes	<p>Rural Communities</p> <p>To be eligible for grant support, a project that falls within funding (capital grants) for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities theme but lead to one or more of the following outputs and outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create new jobs or safeguard existing roles. ▪ Improved engagement numbers ▪ Increased visitor numbers and footfall ▪ Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support ▪ Improved perception of local facilities or amenities and or events
Indicative Outputs	<p>Rural Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No. of organisations receiving grants. ▪ No. of events or participatory programmes supported. ▪ No. of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready. ▪ No. of people reached.





Where can I get support from to complete my application?	<p>If you would like any further support or have any questions, please email: UKSPFenquiries@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk</p> <p>Clarification on points of detail can be provided. Information relating to any requests for clarification will be added to the TVCA website, so it is available to all potential bidders. Clarification requests should be sent to: UKSPFenquiries@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk</p> <p>The deadline for clarification requests is 5pm on Tuesday 26th March 2024.</p>
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