

**SCBF Advance Grant Scheme - Guidelines for applicants**

**Overview**

Shetland Community Benefit Fund (SCBF) will work with community councils in a new enterprise which is intended to help sustain and develop Shetland's communities. SCBF hopes the Advanced Grant Scheme (AGS) will attract imaginative and innovative projects - as well as those smaller projects that make big differences.

The AGS is financed by the Viking Community Fund with £400,000 a year during the construction phase of the Viking Energy Wind Farm - estimated to be about four years. The fund will also be used to develop SCBF's plans and administer the grant scheme.

**AGS Tiers Explained**

The AGS will offer two tiers of financial assistance, to encourage and enable community projects of all sizes to benefit from the fund:

Tier One – Grants of £50 to £500 to support small projects which might need only a small level of support. This could be for an existing project or to develop a new idea. The application is short and easy to access. Only one successful grant application is permitted to the grant scheme every 12 months. The 12 months begins from the date on the grant offer letter.

Tier Two – Grants of over £500 to support projects which need a larger investment. These applications should be from constituted groups with a bank account and up to date accounts. Projects should support the aims of the AGS. Additionally, projects should be sustainable without dependence on continued funding from the AGS. Only one successful grant application is permitted to the grant scheme every 12 months. The 12 months begins from the date on the grant offer letter.

**What will the scheme support?**

Applicants must show how their proposal will "sustain and develop Shetland's communities" and meet other criteria detailed in the guidelines below. The grants can be used in conjunction with funds from other bodies and SCBF encourages applicants to seek additional sources of funding.

**How the scheme works**

SCBF is responsible for all the administration of the AGS and will decide an annual allocation of funds for each community council - up to a third of which can be used for Tier One applications. SCBF is responsible for the due diligence of applications, payment and monitoring of grants and deciding on allocations taking into account information provided by community councils on applications received for their area. Only one successful grant application is permitted to the grant scheme every 12 months. The 12 months begins from the date on the grant offer letter. The AGS will operate during the construction of the Viking windfarm and all funding under this scheme will end when the windfarm becomes operational.

All applications must be sent to SCBF who will check it before sending relevant details to the community council for a decision on whether it should be supported. Applicants must adhere to the maximum word counts detailed on the application form or they will be returned to the applicant for amendment.

All applicants should check what projects can or cannot be supported under the scheme. This information is available in the appendixes below or on the [website](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags).

**Tier One:**

The application process for Tier One is simple and the following process will be used:

* Applications should be sent direct to SCBF for checking
* Details will be forwarded to the community council to decide if the application should be supported
* The community council will give SCBF its decision within six weeks
* SCBF will inform the applicant if their project will be supported and issue grant acceptance letter for signature. SCBF will pay the grant as soon as possible once the signed letter is received
* If an application is unsuccessful the applicant will be told why
* All applicants must accept the SCBF [guidelines](#GeneralGuidelines) and its policies on Equality and Child Protection. These are available on the SCBF [website](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags).
* Application forms are available on the SCBF [website](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags)
* All successful applications will be subject to a periodic monitoring to ensure the project is on track, remaining within guidelines and a report submitted when project completed
* On any matters the decision of SCBF is final

**Tier Two:**

Applications must be sent direct to SCBF. Any project over £5,000 should be discussed with SCBF before any formal application is submitted by sending an outline of the proposal to SCBF by [email](mailto:ags@scbf.org.uk). Tier Two applications must provide substantially more information and show community support and how SCBF's objectives and criteria will be met.

* Application forms are available on the SCBF [website](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags)
* Completed application forms should be returned directly to SCBF
* SCBF will check the application meets the eligibility, sustainability and achievability of fund objectives; and review the applicant’s constitution and financial position
* Details of the proposal will be sent to the community council to ascertain local need and support. The community council will inform SCBF of its decision within six weeks
* SCBF will inform the applicant if their project will be supported and issue grant terms and acceptance letter for signature. SCBF will pay the grant as soon as possible, either in full or in instalments as determined by SCBF to meet the project's needs
* If an application is unsuccessful the applicant will be told why
* All applicants must accept the SCBF [guidelines](#GeneralGuidelines) and its policies on Equality and Child Protection. These are available on the SCBF [website](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags)
* On any matters the decision of SCBF is final

**Appendix A**

**Tier One Information - £50-£500**

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| **Who can apply?** | Any local organisation, community group, charity, community council, or club can apply to their community council for funding. Applications can be considered from any group – including those who don’t have a written constitution or set of rules – and individuals, but not for personal profit. Only one successful grant application is permitted to the grant scheme every 12 months. The 12 months begins from the date on the grant offer letter.  Shetland-wide enterprises, organisations or charities can apply to a community council area if the project is for the direct benefit of that community. If your project covers more than one community council area you must apply separately to each one, stating why each area would benefit from your project. |
| **What projects can be supported?** | Tier 1 grants are to support small local projects which need only a small level of support to aid their delivery. This can be for an existing project or to develop a new idea.  Applicants have to show evidence that the project would:   * Sustain and develop the local community * Enhance quality of life for local residents * Encourage community activity |
| **How to apply** | Tier One applications, guidelines and reporting will be simple and straightforward. An application form is available [here](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags) and completed forms returned to SCBF.  ***If you are considering applying to more than one community council you are advised to contact SCBF beforehand to discuss your project.*** |
| **What cannot be supported?** | See the [list below](#Cannotsupport) for details of what cannot be funded. |
| **What do I do next?** | You are advised to read the guidelines [below](#GeneralGuidelines) as you have to accept these when making an application. Then complete an [application form](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags) and return to SCBF. |
| **What happens after an application is submitted?** | After SCBF receives and checks your application, the community council will consider your application and inform SCBF of its recommendation. A decision on your application should be made within eight weeks of receiving the application. If successful a grant acceptance letter will be issued. If unsuccessful you will be informed of the reason. |

**Appendix B**

**Tier Two Information - Over £500**

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| **Who can apply?** | Social enterprises, charities, organisations, community councils or businesses\* which need funding to support projects or activities consistent with SCBF priorities may apply for a grant. You must have a constitution (governing document or set of rules), be set up on a not‐for‐profit basis and have independently verified or audited accounts. Only one successful grant application is permitted to the grant scheme every 12 months. The 12 months begins from the date on the grant offer letter.  Shetland-wide enterprises, organisations or charities can apply to a community council area if the project is for the direct benefit of that community. If your project covers more than one community council area you must apply separately to each one, stating why each area would benefit from your project. Only one successful grant application is permitted to the grant scheme every 12 months irrespective of how many community councils are applied to. The 12 months begins from the date on the grant offer letter.  \**Businesses can only apply for projects that support or retain essential skills in a local community through training and apprenticeships.* |
| **What type of projects can be supported** | Projects **must** support at least one of the following priorities:   * Reducing poverty and social deprivation, particularly child poverty * Promoting social inclusion and mental wellbeing * Promoting improved transport within and between communities that would add value to a wider Shetland Community * Energy improvement schemes - energy reduction, fuel poverty, local renewable schemes * Developing or improving community assets * Supporting the local community's economy by retaining essential skills through training and apprenticeships * Developing or improving local heritage, cultural, sport, and arts facilities or activities * Improving telecommunications within the local community * Protecting or improving the local environment |
| **SCBF Objectives - What information must I show?** | All applicants must also show how the project:   * Sustains and develops the local community * Represents value for money – evidence that the project has a high impact for the amount of grant * Shows community involvement – evidence that the community is engaged in the development and implementation of the project * Is financially viable – evidence that the project will be maintained beyond the period of grant funding (if applicable) |
| **How to apply?** | Read these guidelines carefully to ensure your project meets the criteria. Fill in an application form, available [here](http://www.scbf.org.uk/ags) and return it to SCBF together with any supporting documents that are required.  ***If you are looking for funding over £5,000 you should email SCBF with an outline of the project before submitting a formal application.***  ***If you are considering applying to more than one community council you are advised to contact SCBF beforehand to discuss your project.*** |
| **What cannot be supported?** | See the [list below](#Cannotsupport) for what cannot be funded |
| **What do I do next?** | You are advised to read the [guidelines](#GeneralGuidelines) as you must accept these when making an application. Then complete the application form and return it to SCBF. |
| **What happens next?** | SCBF will check the eligibility, sustainability and achievement of fund objectives of your project and then ask the community council whether it supports the project, based on the project description and community involvement application sections. A decision on your application should be made within eight weeks of receiving the application. SCBF will issue successful applicants a grant acceptance and terms letter for signing and will issue payment via BACS once grant conditions (if required) are met. Payments will either be in full or in instalments depending on the project's requirements. SCBF will support successful tier two projects to complete monitoring and evaluation. If an application is unsuccessful you will be informed of the reason |

**Appendix C**

**General Guidelines**

* Unless there are special circumstances all projects must be open to all local residents.
* All projects must be self-sustaining and not require on-going funding from this SCBF scheme - unless the relevant community council agrees to recommend to SCBF that it wishes specific funding to be set aside in future year(s) that the Advance Grant Scheme is operating.
* All applicants must show whether additional sources of funding have been approached.
* The purchase of a community asset, a building or extensions/improvements to existing buildings will be considered providing there is evidence of resources to maintain it without further funding from SCBF.
* All monies should be spent within 12 months of grant award unless a longer timescale was approved beforehand by SCBF or extenuating circumstances can be proved to SCBF.
* All successful applicants are required to publicise and, where appropriate, have permanent recognition of source of funding support from SCBF and the Viking Community Fund.
* Applicants must have appropriate protection of children and vulnerable people, disability access and other relevant policies.
* If any project involves employing staff the Living Wage Scotland must be adhered to.
* All successful applicants must accept the SCBF's policies on: Data Protection ; Child Protection; Equality and pay the minimum wage determined by the Living Wage Scotland scheme.
* Applications for *routine* maintenance or running costs, including salaries, rates, rents or expenditure normally funded from a community council's budget will not be accepted.
* Non-routine maintenance work will be eligible.
* Applicants must provide an accurate list of the costs involved in the work, service, project or items for which they need the grant. We require quotations if your grant request is for equipment, vehicles or refurbishment work. Please supply at least two competitive quotes. If this is not possible or appropriate, please tell us why.
* All unspent money at the end of the project must be returned to SCBF.
* All successful applicants for tier 2 will provide monitoring and evaluation reports to SCBF together with accounts for the project.
* SCBF's decision on any application is final.

**Appendix D**

**What cannot be supported under the scheme**

The Advance Payment Scheme cannot be used to support:

* The advancement of religion or party politics.
* Activities that are generally understood to be the exclusive responsibility of a statutory authority.
* Projects primarily benefiting residents outside Shetland.
* Activities contrary to the interests of VEWF or its subsidiaries.
* Activities likely to bring VEWF or its subsidiaries into disrepute.
* The costs of energy consumption.
* Anti-renewable energy/wind farm activities.
* Trips abroad.
* Retrospective funding (i.e. paying for costs incurred before a decision on an application to the Fund for support can be made).
* Individuals for their direct gain
* The purchase of firearms
* Fees for performing at an event
* Fees for professional media broadcasting of an event

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