



Towns and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) Resilience & Recovery Fund



APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTE

These guidance notes will help you to complete the COVID-19 Towns and BIDs Resilience and Recovery Fund application form and provides key information about the fund's requirements.

1. Context

The Scottish Government is inviting Local Authorities, Community and Development Trusts, Town Teams, Town Partnerships, Community Councils, Business Improvement Districts, and other eligible groups to consider how best to support local businesses and communities through the ongoing coronavirus crisis, particularly as lockdown restrictions begin to ease through Scotland's [Recovery Route Map](#).

The £2 million Towns and BIDs Resilience and Recovery Fund is in addition to the £1 million BIDs Resilience Fund announced in March, and is intended to support localised response activities contributing to town centre and high street resilience and recovery. The funding is to be allocated via the following streams:

- £1 million will be allocated directly to towns (please see list of eligible organisations below) to address immediate priorities. Eligible organisations are able to apply for the fund from Monday 15 June.
- £700,000 will be allocated to Business Improvement Districts. BIDs will be able to access the new funding from September 2020 when the current BID Resilience Fund expires. Information will be communicated via Scotland's Improvement Districts' website – <https://improvementdistricts.scot/>.
- The remaining funding will be used for data analysis, communications and the development of a national media campaign to support town and high street recovery.

Where you can agree a recovery strategy for your town, BID area or city district with your local authority, the Towns and BIDs Resilience and Recovery Fund exists to help resource your project delivery. This fund is administered by Scotland's Towns Partnership, the national body for towns.

As indicated above, eligible organisations can apply for the Towns and BIDs Resilience and Recovery Fund from Monday 15th June. **The final closing date for applications is 5pm, Friday 24th July**, however funds will be allocated on a rolling basis from Monday 15th June. **Please note and apply as early as possible**, once your project has been agreed with your Local Authority, as depending on applications received, the total fund may be allocated before the 24th July deadline is reached.

2. Eligibility and Scale

The application process is geared towards supporting as many recovery projects as possible. Applications will be judged on merit but unfortunately there is a possibility that not all will be funded. We estimate that approximately 48 large and medium towns and 60 small towns will receive funding.

Scale

The level and distribution of grants will be allocated in part according to the population scale of towns, which you will be asked to indicate in your application. To view the population of your town, you can search your town using the [Understanding Scottish Places website](#) (see hyperlink) or view interim census estimates for your town on the [NRS website here](#) (see hyperlink).

These scales and the initial estimates of the possible distribution of funds are:

Larger Towns - population 30,000 and above; we estimate funding 14 projects at £20,000.

Medium Towns - population 10,000-29,000; we estimate funding 16 projects at £15,000.

Towns – population of 5,000-9,999; we estimate funding 18 projects at £10,000

Small Towns - population of <5,000; we estimate funding 60 projects at £5,000

Geography

Analysis will be undertaken when agreeing awards to ensure there is a fair geographic spread of funding.

Eligible Organisations

As per the current BIDs Resilience Fund, we will fund constituted groups with bank accounts and suitable governance controls, and where a recovery plan has been agreed in partnership with the local authority. Local authorities are also able to apply directly to the fund.

Constituted groups may include: Town Centre Partnerships, Town Teams, Traders or Business Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Community or Development Trusts, Housing Associations, Council-led initiatives, CICs, SCIOs or Charitable Community Groups.

Towns with Business Improvement Districts which are already benefiting from the COVID-19 BIDs Resilience Fund will only be eligible in exceptional circumstances for the £1m Towns Fund. BIDs will be able to access the new recovery funding from September 2020 when the current BIDs Resilience Fund expires.

Quality Control

The fund is only open to applications from constituted groups where there is an agreed local recovery response with the local Authority.

Applications will be judged on the quality of the recovery response proposed, and funding may be adjusted to reflect the quality of application. Priority consideration may also be given to towns in areas of higher multiple deprivation as categorised by the SMID measurement.

3. Projects and Activities

Those benefiting from the fund will be expected to use this to support their local COVID-19 response strategy. Below are a list of ideas and suggestions which could form a part of this strategy, and which can be tailored to local needs and circumstances.

Partnership

Begin by speaking to your liaison contact in Local Government to agree to a COVID-19 Towns Recovery plan. Other partners could include Business Gateway, your enterprise agency (i.e. Scottish Enterprise / Highlands & Islands Enterprise / South of Scotland Enterprise), VisitScotland, Development Trusts, Community Groups, Housing Associations, the Federation of Small Businesses, Chambers of Commerce, or sector specific umbrella bodies.

Scotland's Towns Partnership and Scotland's Improvement Districts will assist by hosting information about funding, case studies and best practice in relation to COVID-19 recovery activity on our web platforms.

Advice, Information and Support

Use or develop your key contact details, databases, social media and communication assets that will allow you to quickly cascade critical information and advice to your businesses, partners and the wider community.

If you are not already, you could consider becoming a local communication source for businesses and the community, and a source of partnership intelligence. Where appropriate, endeavour to share all the latest links and information on reopening guidelines, grants, funding and other relief with your local network. Share sector guidance on how to reopen compliantly and "what's open" information.

Project Ideas to Support Resilience and Recovery

- Physical distancing and public health infrastructure: supply or installation of distancing markers, outdoor protection while queuing, protective screens, PPE, and hand sanitising equipment.
- Street wardens, ambassadors or volunteers to help local authorities manage public spaces and streets.
- Development of 'virtual high streets': digital markets, e-commerce platforms & apps for your town.
- 'Open for Business' maps or directories made available via local media and online portals; listing information on operating businesses and emergency contacts.
- Develop social media, print and local campaigns around a 'Love Local' message.
- Create local online job or volunteering platforms.
- Develop digital and physical assets to help connect different demographics to the town – cycling infrastructure, walking trails, local knowledge apps / competitions, individual retailers vox pops, etc.
- Hyper-local delivery mechanisms to assist local organisations to support vulnerable groups.
- Advice on rates, tax and grants for businesses and employees: get local financial or legal experts to host webinars and YouTube content for businesses to help guide them through the current support landscape and / or public health guidelines.
- Ensure responses are targeting all local businesses, also try to partner with surrounding towns or districts which may not have the benefit of a BID or towns group delivering a COVID-19 response.
- Develop new links with other local organisations and agencies e.g. Local Housing Associations, Development Trusts, Charities, Social Enterprises, Health and Care Partnerships.
- Think of ways to support key workers, NHS and emergency services and those on the frontline.
- Mobilise philanthropic champions to spearhead investment and to set up or support local community crowdfunding platforms to provide those self isolating with the opportunity to contribute.

- Engage local taxi and transport firms who could be critical in delivering goods, medicines, patients and vulnerable support. .

4. Process and Approval

Scotland's Towns Partnership will assess and make recommendations on applications to Scottish Government for final agreement before awards are made.

Timeline

Monday 15th June - Applications open.

Funds will be allocated on a rolling basis.

Friday 24th July, 5pm - The final closing date for applications.

Please note to apply as early as possible once your project has been agreed with your Local Authority, as depending on applications received, the total fund may be allocated before the 24th July deadline is reached.

Process

Email your completed application to Alison Jones: alison@scotlandstowns.org. You will receive an acknowledgement that your application has been received and the initial fund eligibility has been checked, i.e. organisation structure, population size, a relevant Local Authority co-signatory and bank statement.

Applications will be approved and funded on an on-going basis. The application process is geared towards supporting as many recovery projects as possible. Applications will be judged on merit but unfortunately there is a possibility that not all will be funded.

Funding offer

As part of the offer of funding there will be a requirement to:

- Provide information on proposed project / activity.
- Maintain accurate records of your project activity and expenditure.
- Provide feedback on your project's progress. An activity report will be required to be submitted at a date agreed after the funds have been dispersed.
- See also Section 5: Communications and Marketing.

5. Communications and Marketing

If you are successful in your application, you are encouraged to issue a local press release or notice on social media welcoming the award and indicating the activities that the monies will help to support. Key social media handles are: @ScotlandsTowns and @ScotGovFairer. If you would like to discuss or request input for a press release, please contact Ewan Robertson, ewan@scotlandstowns.org.

Scotland's Towns Partnership will also encourage people to engage with their town centres and high streets during this period via a 'Scotland Loves Local' media and digital communications campaign.

6. Completing the Application Form:

The application form consists of three sections. Each section must be completed **in full** before the application will be assessed.

Please send your completed application form to Alison Jones at alison@scotlandstowns.org.

Section A: Basic Information

Q1. Contact and Eligibility Details

- **Contact Name** – Who is the lead contact for the purpose of this application? This is the person who we will communicate with on a day to day basis e.g. Manager/CEO.
- **Telephone Number** – Please enter the telephone number of the lead contact.
- **Address** – Please enter the address of the lead contact – this is the organisation address NOT personal address.
- **Email** – Please enter the email address of the lead contact. Please ensure this is entered correctly to avoid emails being undeliverable.
- **Organisation Name** – Please enter the name of your Organisation.
- **Organisation Structure** - Please enter your organisation's structure. This could be, for example: Town Centre Partnerships, Town Teams, Traders or Business Associations, Chambers, Community or Development Trusts, Housing Associations, Council-led initiatives, CICs, SCIOs or Charitable Community Groups, etc.
- **Town and population** - Please state the town that you are applying on behalf of and also its population size. Census data can be found on the Understanding Scottish Places platform <https://www.usp.scot/>
- **Website** – Please enter your organisation's website address.

Q2. Local Authority Contact Details

- **Local Authority Contact Name:** Please enter the name of the Council Officer you will be working with you for the purposes of this project/programme e.g. Head of Economic Development, Director of Place Management etc.
- **Position of Local Authority Contact** - e.g. Head of Economic Development, Director of Place Management.
- **Telephone number** – Please enter the telephone number of the above.
- **Address of Local Authority** – Please enter the address of the Local Authority Head Office.
- **Email** – Please enter the actual email address of the Council Officer and NOT a generic contact email.

Section B: COVID-19 Response

Q1. Please provide specific details on the project/activity or expenditure your project is going to undertake (max 400 words). Include what you will be doing, how you are going to do it and include any partners and the roles they will play.

For more information, please see Section 3 of this Advice note.

Section C: Project Details

Q1. Please give an indication of the proposed project costs.

Q2. Enter the amount of any funding your organisation, partnership or external funding providers will invest in the project .

Q3. Please give an indication as to what the funding you are requesting will be spent on. There is no need to itemise the spend fully - broad headings will suffice at this point. Consider, specific to project programme, such items as (but not limited to); staff costs, material production, purchasing of items/goods/services, training materials, volunteer expenses, etc.

Q4. Please tell us briefly what the tasks and activities are to successfully complete the project. What are the main deliverables and outcomes of the project?

As part of the offer of funding there will be a requirement to

- Provide information on proposed project / activity.
- Maintain accurate records of your project activity and expenditure.
- Provide feedback on your project's progress at agreed intervals.

Section D: Bank Details

On application, please provide Bank Details along with a copy of your latest bank statement.

Section E: Endorsement

The application must be signed by an authorised signatory from the applicant organisation and countersigned by the Local Authority Chief Executive or lead Local Authority contact.

Due to social distancing rules, a digital signature is acceptable.

The application must be jointly submitted by email from the applicant and the Local Authority Chief Executive or lead Local Authority contact.