

**INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES FUND (ICF) 2019/20
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Question No.	Question	Answer
1	How can my organisation find out about the fund, and how to apply?	<p>You should download all of the ICF documents using the following link: https://www.gov.scot/publications/investing-in-communities-fund-application-form-and-guidance/ These documents provide all of the information that you should require.</p> <p>Please email InvestingInCommunities@gov.scot if you experience any problems, or if you have any specific questions regarding the fund that are not covered in this FAQ.</p>
2	Will there be any information sessions to discuss the fund and the application process?	<p>There are no plans to deliver information sessions at the moment as we will continue to refresh this FAQ as we receive enquiries prior the closing date for the current funding round. We may consider information sessions for any future rounds. Please keep checking the website for FAQ updates and any future funding announcements: https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/empowering-communities-fund/</p>
3	Is the Investing in Communities Fund an annual fund?	<p>The closing date for the current funding window is 1800 hours on 14 June 2019, and you can apply for up to three consecutive years' funding to 31 March 2022. Future funding rounds will depend on take-up of this current round and available funding in each financial year. These would be announced on the SG website https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/empowering-communities-fund/</p> <p>If your proposal is sufficiently developed to meet the funding criteria you may therefore want to take the opportunity to apply now.</p>

4	When will the ICF grant funding commence?	ICF applications can request grant funding with a starting date of 1 October 2019. ICF will not fund costs that have been incurred prior to this date therefore you must not include these in your application.
5	If the fund ends on 31 March 2022 is the ICF grant only available for 2 ¹ / ₂ years?	The fund covers three financial years i.e. 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. Due to the timing of the current funding round, funding will be available from 1 October 2019 until 31 March 2022.
6	How does our organisation know if it is eligible to apply for ICF grant funding?	<p>If your organisation is able to complete the pre-application eligibility checklist satisfactorily, you are eligible to apply. If you are in any doubt regarding your organisation's eligibility you might want to consider working in partnership with another organisation that is eligible to apply. The ICF guidance notes confirm that statutory bodies, individuals and sole traders, community organisations based outside Scotland, and non-departmental public bodies are not eligible to apply.</p> <p>Eligible applicants are required to promote or improve the interests of their local communities within a locality, noting that the fund is available to support people who live there and are experiencing inequalities of outcome as a result of deprivation or rural disadvantage, where the deep-seated impacts of disadvantage, poverty and inequality need support to develop long term solutions.</p>
7	What does 'democratically elected' management committee mean in question 7 of the ICF pre-application eligibility checklist?	By "democratically elected" we mean individuals chosen by open election rather than by appointment.
8	Is the fund only open to local organisations, or can national organisations with projects located in, and dedicated to, local level community development in a particular locality or region also apply?	If your organisation is able to complete the pre-application eligibility checklist satisfactorily, then you are eligible to apply. The ICF guidance notes confirm that proposals must be situated in a locality and robust evidence provided that the local community has been consulted on, and with, in relation to the proposal's development and delivery. Therefore, depending on the nature of the proposal, national organisations might want to consider partnering with an eligible

		<p>locally-based applicant organisation that can support, co-design and co-deliver with the local community.</p> <p>Strong local partnership working and local community engagement to address local circumstances and needs must also be evidenced in the application.</p>
9	My organisation works with communities of interest. Who can apply and what can they apply for?	<p>If your organisation is able to complete the pre-application eligibility checklist satisfactorily then you are eligible to apply. The fund supports proposals from organisations that are place-based, and where the community of interest is situated within a locality (i.e. local community or local authority-wide), but not if Scotland-wide. In addition, the application must include robust evidence to demonstrate that the local community, including the community of interest, has been consulted on, and with, in relation to the proposal's development and delivery. You may find it helpful to refer to page 5 of the ICF guidance notes. If you don't consider your organisation eligible to apply, you might want to consider partnering with an eligible applicant organisation that can support, co-design and co-deliver with the local community.</p>
10	We are a religious organisation. Are we eligible to apply?	<p>If your organisation is able to complete the pre-application eligibility checklist satisfactorily, then you are eligible to apply. However, the fund will not pay for costs associated with the promotion of a religion. The ICF guidance notes and application help notes provide further information regarding the fund and its purpose.</p>
11	We are an established community group but are in the process of registering as a charity with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Can we apply for ICF grant?	<p>Page 6 of the guidance notes confirm applicant eligibility, noting that we can only support organisations that are already established and solvent with robust governance arrangements in place. You can therefore explain the current situation regarding your organisational status in the ICF application, which we will consider during the assessment process, or you might decide to partner with another organisation that is eligible to apply to the fund.</p>

<p>12</p>	<p>We would like to apply in conjunction with a Community Council but the application form focuses on asking questions about the lead organisation. Some direction/clarification here would be appreciated.</p>	<p>Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the application form require the lead applicant to provide answers that relate specifically to their own organisation as it would be the lead applicant that is responsible for ensuring compliance with the grant conditions should the application be successful. There are other sections in the application form that enable the lead applicant to provide details and evidence of collaboration and partnership working.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Is there a restriction on the number of applications that my organisation can submit?</p>	<p>There is no restriction as each application will be considered on its merits. However, recognising the potential benefits of economies of scale and depending on the nature of your proposals, you might want to consider submitting a single application that answers the questions for each of the localities included in the proposal. It will be for your organisation to decide its preferred approach.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>Are you likely to support higher or lower cost projects in terms of the level of ICF grant requested?</p>	<p>All proposals will be given equal consideration with reference to the fund's scoring criteria. However, we recognise that supporting proposals that request the maximum ICF grant will reduce the overall number of proposals that can be approved. We therefore encourage all applicants to give this careful consideration and only request the level of ICF grant that they require to enable their proposal to be delivered. This will enable the best cross-section of proposals to be supported.</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>Is £250,000 the amount that applicants can apply for in each year or across all three years?</p>	<p>£250,000 is the amount that you can apply for over three consecutive financial years until 31 March 2022. You can request this amount to cover a single financial year providing you make a robust case in your ICF application, however, you will not be able to reapply for further ICF grant until after 31 March 2022 if and when the fund is inviting further applications.</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>Is £250,000 the maximum that applicants can apply for during the current funding window?</p>	<p>We will consider applications that request more than £250,000 providing you make a robust case in the application form, and noting the answer to question 14 above.</p>

17	If there is more than one community of place in a single application does the maximum funding limit of £250,000 still apply?	We recognise that applications covering more than one community of place are likely to reflect a scaling-up of project costs to support a wider range of high impact outcomes. We will therefore consider single applications that request more than the £250,000 limit over the consecutive three year period, where the amount requested is justified clearly in the application. However, as key priorities of the fund include collaborative approaches and partnership working this may enable your organisation to attract match funding as a contribution towards the project costs. Similarly, with a larger scale project, economies of scale should enable you to reflect on the most effective and efficient way to design and/or deliver the project. Please also consider the answer to question 14 above.
18	Can you provide me with comments regarding my draft application?	For reasons of openness and transparency we are unable to comment on individual proposals or applications, however, if you have any questions please send these directly to the Investing in Communities Fund mailbox InvestingInCommunities@gov.scot and we will get back to you as soon possible.
19	Can applicants to the fund append reports or other documents when they submit the application form, pre-application eligibility checklist, and the memorandum of understanding (or similar) if applicable?	Given the level of interest in the fund, the application form and the pre-application eligibility checklist are the documents that will inform the assessment process – other documents will not be considered.
20	Do we need to provide letters of support with our application?	The only information that needs to be submitted by the closing date is a fully completed application form, the pre-application eligibility checklist, and the memorandum of understanding (or similar) if applicable. If you have letters of support for your proposal you might want to mention this in the application form. We may subsequently request a copy of these.
21	Can we exceed the maximum word limits when answering questions in the application form?	We recognise that you might want to include a lot of information in your application. For example, you may want to reference various forms of evidence to demonstrate the need for your proposal, including reports or other research studies, however, it will be for the

		applicant to distil the key facts for inclusion in the application to ensure that each of the answers is clear, concise, relevant and appropriate. We will be flexible with the word count, <u>within reason</u> .
22	Can we apply for funding to deliver a project and/or service that has already been designed?	You can apply for funding to undertake an activity that has already been designed. However, in your ICF application, you must provide evidence of the ways in which you involved the local community and other partners at the design and development stage.
23	Can our organisation submit an application that builds on a project that we delivered previously?	We will consider applications that build on previous learning providing they also meet the criteria for the fund. Amongst other things, the ICF application must evidence strong local partnership working and local community engagement to address local circumstances, priorities and needs. Proposals must be situated in a locality, and robust evidence provided in the application to demonstrate that the local community, including any communities of interest, have been consulted on, and with, in relation to the proposal's development, design and delivery, noting that page three of the guidance (Aims of the Fund) confirms the fund's purpose as promoting a more responsive, community-led place-based approach whilst also making best use of shared resources.
24	Is it possible to apply for continuation of a post or a project, someone who has been funded for one year already, but through a different funding stream?	We will consider applications that propose this, providing the application demonstrates a good fit with the ICF criteria and clearly explains the rationale for further funding being required to support continuation of the post and/or project.
25	If an organisation already receives funding to support a specific project and/or our organisational capacity building, can our organisation apply to ICF for funding to support a different post?	We will consider applications that propose this, providing the application demonstrates a good fit with the ICF criteria and clearly explains the rationale for funding being required to support a different post.
26	Can we submit a combined development and design/delivery proposal?	As well as development-only (Section 4) and design/delivery-only proposals (Section 5), page 9 for the ICF guidance note confirms that applications proposing both the development and design/delivery of

		activities and services that address the needs of the community will also be considered. Proposals must demonstrate that the required skills and capacity either already exist within the organisation to deliver project activity, or that securing skills/capacity (in Section 4 or via alternative means/sources of funding) is included as part of the proposal. Depending on the volume and quality of all proposals received it may only be possible to approve one element of your proposal.
27	If an organisation has some funds for the current financial year (2019/20), but not for years 2 and 3, can years 2 and 3 be applied for in this round?	We will consider accurately costed applications as part of the current funding round that are requesting ICF grant in 2020/21 and 2021/22 providing the application demonstrates a good fit with the ICF criteria and justifies why the ICF grant is not required in 2019/20 - this might be because the project is already fully funded in 2019/20.
28	Is it essential that our ICF proposal has other sources of match funding to help fund the project costs?	Although match funding is not essential you will need to explain clearly in the ICF application why this is the case. You might want to consider the most effective ways of working in partnership as a way to help attract some match funding if this is an option for you.
29	What is the intervention rate of this Fund?	There are no fixed intervention rates for the fund as each proposal will be specific to local circumstances and needs. However, as key priorities of the fund include collaborative approaches and partnership working this may enable your organisation to attract match funding to support your project. Securing match funding may also better enable you to plan for the project beyond the end of the requested ICF grant funding period. If there is little or no match funding, you will need to fully explain the reasons for this in the application.
30	Can we use other Scottish Government funding as match funding for an ICF proposal?	You <u>cannot</u> use the following funds as match funding for the Investing In Communities Fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspiring Communities Fund (ACF) • Social Economy Growth Fund (SEGF) • Social Innovation Fund (SIF)

31	Does match funding for the proposal need to be confirmed, or is it ok to include money applied for, with decision pending?	Question 7.2 of the application form asks applicants to differentiate this in the Match Funding table.
32	What evidence should our organisation provide to demonstrate that the proposal is based in an area of disadvantage?	You can use evidence from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and/or from other forms of research/local feasibility studies etc. The source of the evidence must be cited in your application. The evidence must also be robust and as recent and relevant as possible, so that you can relate this directly to your proposal.
33	Can our organisation apply for grant funding to purchase material and equipment to continue delivering our project?	ICF will fund eligible project costs. A list of the costs that are not eligible is provided on page 9 of the ICF guidance notes. However, to enable the fund to consider your proposal, your ICF application must answer all of the questions asked to clearly demonstrate that the proposal meets the criteria for funding.
34	Can we include things like equipment costs and software to support delivery of a project/service and/or our organisation's own capacity building.	We will consider reasonable operational and running costs where this is clearly justified in your application as being required to directly support and enable your proposal to be delivered. Page 9 of the ICF guidance lists costs that are not eligible for funding.
35	Will the fund consider professional fees?	Professional fees will be considered. However, the proposal must be from an eligible applicant organisation, with the application providing clear evidence of the community-led approach and its fit with the guidance criteria for the fund.
36	Will the fund support capital costs?	Page 9 of the ICF guidance note lists the costs that are not eligible for funding. This includes capital project costs - for example, the purchase of buildings, building works including routine repairs/maintenance, maintenance service contracts, refurbishment, and ICT infrastructure. Question 7.3 of the application form help notes confirms that computer/laptops will be considered for funding.

		If you are able to source other funding to pay for ineligible costs, ICF will still be able to consider funding eligible costs to help support your proposal.
37	Page 9 of the ICF guidance notes state that core costs are ineligible. Does this mean that we cannot apply for support to deliver our existing services but have to apply for a new project?	The fund will consider reasonable project-specific revenue and direct overhead costs associated with delivery of the project or service, together with reasonable running costs. It may be that an element of your existing overheads (whether for a Section 4 or 5 proposal) would fall into this category, however, any costs that do not directly support and enable delivery of the proposal/project or project outcomes are ineligible. You should provide an explanation/justification for including any such costs in the application form.
38	Can we build in training costs for our partner organisations, including Community Councils and trusts?	We will consider this if your application includes a strong justification for this being essential to support/enable the proposal to be achieved.
39	Can we build in a contingency due to the uncertainty of Brexit?	The list of ineligible costs on Page 9 of the ICF guidance notes includes contingency costs.
40	Does the fund take account of inflation over the funding period?	The application form must include details of accurate project costings over the period for which ICF grant funding has been requested. We will be unable to subsequently add on an allowance for any inflationary increases if your application is successful.
41	Will partial awards be possible? For example, apply for £50,000 but awarded £25,000?	This will depend on a number of factors including whether or not the proposal includes ineligible costs that are disallowed. It might also be that a combined Section 4 and Section 5 funding request will only be awarded funding for one of the two sections.
42	When will the Independent Assessment Panel meet to assess applications and when will successful applicants will be informed?	The date for the independent panel to meet has yet to be confirmed, however, we expect to contact all projects by 30/09/19 regarding the outcome of their application. You may find it helpful to refer to the timeline on page 12 of the Guidance Notes for further information.

43	Will the scoring methodology be made public?	Page 17 of the ICF guidance provides details of the scoring criteria. We will also consider the ways in which the proposal demonstrates deliverability, added value and sustainability. Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with reasons for their application not being supported after the assessment panel meets.
44	What sections of the ICF application form should my organisation complete?	In <u>all</u> cases you must fully complete sections 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8 of the application form. If you are applying for ICF grant to support your organisation's own capacity building to help it to become a more robust, resilient and sustainable community anchor organisation you must also complete Section 4. If your organisation is applying to design and/or deliver a project or service for the benefit of the community you must complete Section 5 instead. If you are applying for grant to support both your organisation's own capacity building and to separately design and/or deliver a project or service for the benefit of the community you must complete Section 4 and Section 5 of the application form. Please refer to pages 8 and 9 of the ICF guidance note for further details.
45	Our organisation is applying for ICF grant to support both its own organisational capacity building and to deliver a Participatory Budgeting (PB) event. Which sections(s) of the application form should we complete?	<p>Section 4 of the application form is the correct section to complete if your organisation is applying for ICF grant to support its own organisational capacity building to enable it to become a more robust, resilient and sustainable community anchor organisation.</p> <p>If you are also applying to the fund to support a Participatory Budgeting event, where this is to enable the active involvement of the wider local community in helping to inform decisions on local spending priorities, then you must complete Section 5 of the application form as explained on pages 8 and 9 of the ICF guidance note. The eligible costs to run an inclusive PB voting event include venue and catering, publicity and marketing and any other associated practical administrative costs. You should only include details of your PB activities if you are requesting ICF grant to support this and, if this is the case, you should separately record the amount being requested for the participatory budget voting event (maximum of £3,000 per</p>

		<p>event) in section 7.1 of the application form as your answer to “How much do you need to run an inclusive PB process to engage the more vulnerable and hard to reach in the community?” ICF grant <u>cannot</u> be used to augment the value of the participatory budget available to the local community to support local interventions.</p>
46	<p>Can our organisation apply for ICF grant to support more than one Participatory Budgeting (PB) event? And, if so, how much can we apply for and how do we record this in the application form?</p>	<p>Your organisation can apply for funding to deliver any combination of ICF-eligible activities over the three financial years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. This includes a staged funding approach, as explained on page 3 of the ICF guidance note. £3,000 is the maximum that you can apply for to the fund towards supporting a single Participatory Budgeting event, where this is to enable the active involvement of the wider local community in helping to inform decisions on local spending priorities. The eligible costs to run an inclusive PB voting event include venue and catering, publicity and marketing and any other associated practical administrative costs. You can apply for funding to support more than one Participatory Budgeting event over the period covered by your ICF funding request, however, you will need to provide a clear justification and rationale for each event in your application form.</p> <p>You should include details of your Participatory Budgeting proposal(s) in Section 5 of the application form, with details of the ICF grant that you are specifically requesting for this being recorded in section 7.1 as your answer to “How much do you need to run an inclusive PB process to engage the more vulnerable and hard to reach in the community?”</p> <p>ICF grant <u>cannot</u> be used to augment the value of the participatory budget available to the local community to support local interventions.</p>
47	<p>Can our organisation apply for ICF grant to augment its existing Participatory Budgeting (PB) grant allocation?</p>	<p>ICF grant is available to support local Participatory Budget voting events. The eligible costs to run an inclusive PB voting event include venue and catering, publicity and marketing and any other associated practical administrative costs. ICF grant <u>cannot</u> be used to augment</p>

		the value of the participatory budget available to the local community to support local interventions.
48	Can our organisation apply for ICF grant so that we can augment grants that we already provide, to then disburse this ourselves to local community groups?	As the ICF grant is available to empower community groups themselves as part of a more responsive, community-led place based approach we would not consider an application from an intermediary organisation as you have described.
49	Do the fund's <u>ineligible</u> capital costs include vehicles?	Yes. As ICF is a revenue fund it will not fund the purchase, rental or lease of any major capital assets including buses, cars and other vehicles. However, the ICF application form help notes confirm at Q7.3 that computers and laptops will be considered as we would expect that this equipment would be used to support organisational capacity building and/or the delivery of IT/skills development training for the benefit of the community.