Business Support Funding

Closed programmes

Funding is available for organisations or partnerships to support those working with heritage to build their skills in organisational leadership and management.

Important

Business Support Funding is now closed to new applications. Explore our available funding.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund is inviting organisations to apply for Business Support Funding. The funding will be used to deliver programmes of training and development to support heritage organisations across the UK to develop their business skills.

We expect to support a programme in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England, with a total grant budget of up to £2million. We are open to proposals that cover more than one country. This forms part of our total £3m investment which also includes funding for a UK-wide enterprise development programme.

This funding is available as part of our capacity building and organisational resilience campaign, launching in spring 2020. In our Strategic Funding Framework we committed to commissioning business support programmes to increase resilience and skills in fundraising, business and financial planning, governance, commercial enterprise and engaging with social investment.

The guidance below sets out what we are aiming to achieve, who we want to benefit and the outcomes we expect. It also explains the application and assessment process and timetable.

Capacity building support

We want to support partnerships or consortia to deliver a bespoke programme of capacity building support across the core building blocks of organisational leadership and management in each of the four countries of the UK. This would include, for example:

- governance
- business planning
- financial planning and management
- strategic leadership
- enterprise development
- fundraising

- impact measurement
- setting and tracking performance

These programmes should be accessible to smaller community organisations operating in heritage looking to professionalise their business practice, as well as medium-sized organisations and larger ones (by income) demonstrating a strong need. There is no requirement on participants to be developing an enterprise model. The emphasis is on development of core skills and opportunities to become better networked, better supported and more forward looking.

Organisations taking part may be at different stages of development and successful delivery partners will need to take account of the diversity of organisations operating in the heritage sector in the design of their programmes.

We expect four programmes to be run at country scale, engaging around 250 organisations across the whole of the UK, although the same lead delivery partner may bid to do this in more than one country. The programmes should offer opportunities for participation from organisations from the full breadth of heritage in each country. Programmes may be delivered through partnerships or consortia involving specialist leadership development and training providers working with heritage umbrella and other bodies to ensure reach into all parts of the sector.

Many skills elements and programme delivery methods are likely to be similar to those outlined for the enterprise development model. Key differences will be:

- taking account of specific needs of smaller/early stage organisations, some with heavy reliance on volunteers
- taking account of the needs of organisations at different stages of development, particularly in relation to delivery of capital projects
- enabling development of networking and influencing skills linked to building capacity for cross-sectoral engagement in a local areas, and fundraising from diverse private sources

How the process works

1. Review the criteria provided on this page.
2. Read the application guidance for grants between £250,000 and £5m to find additional criteria to help with your application.
3. Note that for this funding a development phase is not required, and applicants will submit a delivery round application only.
4. Submit an Expression of Interest via our online application portal by noon 13 January 2020.
5. You will be notified if we would like you to submit a full application.
6. Submit a full application via our online portal by noon 20 February 2020.
7. We will let you know the decision by 28 March 2020.

Who can apply

You can apply if you are:

- a not-for-profit organisation
- a partnership led by a not-for-profit organisation

You can apply for both the enterprise development and business support funding. If you plan to do this, you must submit a separate Expression of Interest form for each strand of funding.

Organisations or partnerships looking to apply should also meet the following criteria:

- demonstrable track record in delivering creative and successful business support programmes with organisations in the heritage sector or with organisations with some similar characteristics to heritage SMEs
- capacity to support organisations across a whole country (Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales or England)
- demonstrable understanding of the needs and challenges of smaller organisations in the heritage sector
- demonstrable commitment to learning and evaluation of what works
- demonstrable commitment to diversity and inclusion
- operational and financial capacity to deliver a programme at this scale

What we're looking for

The training and development programme should aim to provide business support to develop more resilient and forward-looking organisations working in heritage, with:

- more organisations with the skills and capacity to diversify their income, develop their supporters, volunteers and audiences, respond to new opportunities and withstand threats
- stronger networks among peer organisations in heritage across all four countries of the UK

What the programme will achieve

We would expect the funded programme to have the following outcomes for individuals and organisations taking part.

For participating leaders:

- improved confidence and resourcefulness
- expanded networks of personal and professional support
- enhanced business skills including capacity to make improvements and changes in their organisation across governance, financial management and business planning, fundraising, and, where relevant, enterprise development and social investment.
- increased knowledge and skills in setting goals for heritage and social impacts which are clear, communicable and measurable to help demonstrate the value of their activities

For organisations:

- strengthened and more diverse governance
- increased financial resilience
- more diverse sources of income and increased income
- greater reach into their community/communities with expanded and more diverse supporter, audience and/or volunteer base

Target participants

The funded programmes will need to engage participants from across either Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales or England. You can apply for funding for a programme across more than one full country. Our funding overall should reach a minimum of 200–250 participating organisations across the four countries (up to 500 individuals).

Target participants should be:

- small and medium-sized organisations working in heritage
- organisations new to working in heritage (eg asset transfer recipients, or community groups championing intangible heritage)

Leadership and skills focus

The programme will focus on opportunities and challenges facing smaller and medium-sized heritage organisations and the general skills and leadership requirements for success including:

- good governance
- leadership and management
- strategy and horizon scanning
- business planning and financial management
- building a case for support
- fundraising from private sources
- building and diversifying supporters, volunteers and audiences
- engaging across sectors in your local area (influencing)
- understanding of heritage and social value and impact, how to articulate and measure them

Programme and delivery methods

The programme may include significant opportunities for participants to come together face-to-face with their peers across the sector. This could be through, for example:

- group learning from experts in technical skills such as project and financial management
- witness sessions where leaders share their experiences, successes and challenges to build confidence
- study visits to other organisations
- structured learning groups
- peer support
- bring people together as a cohort over a sustained period
- creative use of digital
- bespoke advice and mentoring

Grants for participants

Financial support should be offered to participants to cover travel grants for those who need to travel longer distances or stay overnight in order to participate.

A small unrestricted grant may be offered to the organisations taking part in the programme to give them the capacity to engage.

Budget

The total funding available for programmes across the UK is up to £2m. We would expect individual applications to reflect the scale of heritage sector in each country and be in the region of £150,000 to £900,000. Budgets for each programme should include:

- overall design, development and management of the programme
- recruitment and selection of participating organisations and leaders
- delivery of all programme elements including administering grants to participants and any match funding or other incentive programme
- the cost of grants to participants for travel bursaries, backfill/admin capacity and any match funding
- ongoing monitoring, reporting and evaluation
- end of programme reporting and dissemination

Application and assessment

We are using our standard open programme application process for grants £250,000–£5m for all applicants regardless of level of grant requested. Refer to the standard guidance and help notes when filling in the Expression of Interest form and application form.

Use the **Expression of Interest** form to provide an initial response to this brief. The project title should clearly indicate which funding and area the Expression of Interest is for, eg Enterprise Development UK or Business Support Scotland.

At sift stage we will look at:

- the extent to which your proposals are a creative response to our brief
- your track record and capability to deliver a high quality programme of business support activities, with an understanding of the needs of organisations in the heritage sector
- how well proposals meet our other standard criteria for grants of £250,000–£5m, including our mandatory inclusion outcome, and using the Welsh language if your project will benefit people in Wales

Applicants whose proposals are being taken forward after the Expression of Interest stage will be asked to complete a single-stage delivery-round application.

Evaluation

We will work up the detail of our evaluation framework for the enterprise development and business support funding in collaboration with the funded organisations. Applicants should allocate some budget for evaluation within the programme budget.

The evaluation approach will need to include collecting data and tracking progress of participants in these programmes across a range of measures over time, for example:

- organisations having measurably different funding mixes and business models
- organisations having more valuable and exploitable physical, intangible and financial assets (including but not limited to reserves)

- improved performance in key areas such as governance
- increased capacity and resources
- developed organisational behaviours and cultures which are known to support resilience

Key dates

- The deadline for Expressions of Interest is noon 13 January 2020. You will be notified if we would like you to submit a full application.
- Submit a full application by noon 20 February 2020.
- Applicants will be notified by 28 March 2020.

Documents to help you apply

£250,000–£5m application guidance

Information and advice for how to write a strong proposal. You should follow this when submitting your Expression of Interest, ensuring you have covered how you would address the points raised in the brief above. If we ask you to make a full application we will give you additional guidance on how to fill in the delivery stage application form.

Application help notes

Useful information to help with completing an online application.

Standard terms of grant £250,000 to £5m

Our terms and conditions for grants of this size.

Questions

If you have a question about our funding, email enquire@heritagefund.org.uk