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UK Shared prosperity Fund – Mid Wales Region

Application Guidance for Cynnal y Cardi Community Development and Support Fund January 2024

1. Introduction

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides three years funding for local investment.

The Mid Wales Region (Ceredigion and Powys) has been allocated £42 million from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2025.

The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. This aligns with Levelling Up White Paper missions, particularly: 'By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.'

The **UKSPF Cynnal y Cardi fund** is a grant scheme administered by Ceredigion County Council to deliver activity in Ceredigion across two of the Investment Priorities:

- **Communities & Place**
- **Supporting Local Business.**

Within each of these investment themes, key local priorities (referred to as interventions) have been identified. These are outlined in the Mid Wales UKSPF Regional Investment Plan (www.growingmid.wales/MidWalesUKSPF) together with the challenges and opportunities facing the region and the associated outputs and outcomes that UK Government are looking for projects to achieve.

For further information on Mid Wales' UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme please contact:

- ce.cynnalycardi@ceredigion.gov.uk

This document is also available in Welsh. You are welcome to communicate with us in Welsh. An application form may be submitted in Welsh; any application submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than an application submitted in English.

2. Introduction to Cynnal y Cardi Community Development and Support Fund

The Cynnal y Cardi Community Development and Support fund can help you make a difference in your community. The aim of the Cynnal y Cardi Community Development and Support fund is to provide small-scale financial support to:

- Support and engage local people, businesses, and communities in delivering sustainable yet innovative solutions to address some of the economic, social and environmental challenges facing their areas
- Provide an opportunity for organisations delivering services or working with communities to pilot new ways of working, or trial ideas that tackle issues aligned with key identified priorities.

- Provide necessary support to help strengthen the social fabric of communities, building pride in place whilst also delivering direct and/or economic benefit.
- Build resilient, healthy, and safe neighbourhoods through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in.

3. Alignment with Local Priorities

Project proposals will need to demonstrate how they align to local priorities.

The Cynnal y Cardi Community Development and Support Fund is aligned to;

- **The UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Priority Communities & Place.**
- **Ceredigion County Council Corporate Plan:**
 - **Priority 1** Boosting the Economy, Supporting Businesses and Enabling Employment.
 - **Priority 2** Creating Caring and Healthy Communities.
 - **Priority 4** Creating Sustainable, Green and Well-connected Communities.
- **Boosting Ceredigion’s Economy: A Strategy for Action 2020-35 (Ceredigion Economic Strategy):**
 - **Priority 1 People.**
 - (i) Promoting Ceredigion as a positive place to live, study, work and grow.
 - (ii) Positively promote opportunities for all to benefit from economic growth.
 - **Priority 2 Place**
 - i. Build on the place plans to identify and deliver opportunities to improve living, working and recreational spaces in town across the three regions.
 - **Priority 4 Connectivity**
 - i. Improve digital exploitation levels in Ceredigion.

The focus of the Cynnal y Cardi Community Development and Support fund will be on:

- To strengthen community resilience activity with a particular focus on the role of Town and Community councils in supporting and engaging with their communities.
- New, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure including local green spaces

- Development and promotion of local year-round events and experiences which encourage people to visit and explore the local area. Applications must demonstrate how the event will make a difference to individuals, communities and the local economy.
- Testing piloting approaches and feasibility studies
- Support for local arts, cultural heritage and creative activities.
- Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for community groups including succession planning – attracting new people, considering and understanding the impact of language, mentoring young people etc.
- Community measures to reduce the cost of living including measures to improve energy efficiency and combat fuel poverty and climate change
- Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities

All applications will be considered on an individual basis, assessed against the criteria set out in this guidance. Payment of the grant is at the absolute discretion of the Local Authority and the Local Partnership.

4. How much funding is available?

The grant will be delivered through two approaches:

- a) Small scale Fast Track Grant Scheme - £1,000 - £10,000
- b) Larger grant - £10,001 - £50,000. Larger bids will not be excluded but a robust rationale will be required.

Each grant award will be based on 80% of eligible costs. Match funding must be cash (rather than “in kind”)

All activity completed and funding claimed by the 31st of December 2024. The grant will provide financial support towards revenue expenditure and some small-scale capital expenditure. The grant will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. Applying is a competitive process and innovation, outcomes and impact and value for money will be a key factor when projects are appraised.

5. What activities are eligible?

It is designed to help organisations put in place the full funding package needed for investments that will help sustain and grow their operations.

Eligible Capital costs:

- Purchase of essential equipment or machinery – this can include adaptations, alterations or upgrading to existing equipment, such as upgraded or improved ventilation system.
- Purchase of new or second-hand equipment which will further develop the business.
- Improvements to commercial premises to further development the business (including fixtures and fittings, furniture, and general office equipment etc. as part of a new office or outdoor facilities).

- Factory vehicles such as forklifts and commercial vans which are green energy.
- Changing of existing lighting, heating to green options
- IT and Telecom hardware if linked directly to the delivery of the proposal.
- Charges associated to the delivery of any capital equipment.

Eligible Revenue Costs

- Staff costs including salaries and contractual benefits, National Insurance and superannuation contributions business travel, subsistence, and accommodation (excluding existing posts and costs relating to directors/ owners of business) – must be new posts or service.
- Training costs including allowances and travel expenses.
- Purchase of advertising, licences
- Social Media support including website development and e-commerce development.
- Specialist software
- Fees of contractors and consultants
- Cost of venue hire
- Marketing Materials and publicity costs
- Items purchased with credit cards are eligible, but applicants will need to demonstrate that the amount of expenditure associated to the grant is evidenced on the credit card bill at the grant claim stage.

Ineligible costs:

- General revenue expenditure such as, staff costs or any other taxes, hire purchase/lease purchases.
- General vehicles such as cars
- General repair and maintenance costs of commercial premises
- Replacement of like for like fixtures and fittings, furniture, and general office equipment etc.
- Contingency fees and costs which were committed or spent before the offer and acceptance of the grant.
- Working capital costs such as stock, rent, rates, administration.
- Costs of work being carried out as a legal statutory requirement, inc. planning permission and architectural plans.
- If the business is VAT registered, then VAT will be ineligible. VAT will be payable in cases of non-VAT registered companies.
- Cash purchases will not be considered for grant payment.
- Items purchased through lease purchase, hire purchase, extended credit agreements/finance leases will not be considered for grant funding.

- Professional fees associated in completing an application for grants.
- The purchase of land or property
- Staff costs of directors/ owners of business

6. Who can apply?

Applications can be received from:

- Not for profit organisations/social enterprises and partnerships
- Registered Charities
- Community groups and networks (I.e., must have a bank account with 2 signatories, constituted community group/network)
- Public sector

Applications can be received from organisations registered outside of Ceredigion, **but any activity must be based within the county, and benefit Ceredigion residents and communities.**

7. Application Process

Initial discussions **MUST** take place to ensure eligibility of activity. Please e-mail ce.cynnalycardi@ceredigion.gov.uk with a short brief outlining your project, and a summary of project costs.

Applications will be dealt with on a first come first serve basis. The application process is competitive and those proposals and those offering the best fit with the criteria and the principles of the fund.

A range of supporting documentation is required along with other information depending on your project. Each applicant must complete and return the following:

- **Application Form including Annex 1, Annex 2, Annex 3 and Annex 4**
- **Any supporting documents in support of the project i.e. letters of support, planning approval**
- **Two years most recent formal accounts**
- **Recent bank statement (with name, address, bank account number and sort code)**
- **Supporting match funding letters or proof of match funding**
- **Written quotes as per procurement guidelines in section 7 of this document**
- **Job Description if project includes employing a new member of staff**

Application forms and guidance are available on the Ceredigion County Council web site Cynnal y Cardi UK Shared Prosperity Fund webpage.

<https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/business/funding-grants/cynnal-y-cardi-uk-shared-prosperity>

You will be able to download the application form and complete all the requested fields along with your additional required documents and submit your application by emailing to ce.cynnalycardi@ceredigion.gov.uk

The application process opens on 1st February 2024. All grant expenditure must take place and be claimed by 31st December 2024.

Please note that expenditure must NOT commence before approval is given, as the grant cannot be awarded retrospectively.

8. Procurement

To ensure best value for money, all goods and services claimed for as part of the project need to be openly and fairly procured. Applicants need to provide written quotes, references to catalogue listings or formal tenders as part of their application.

The following guidelines should be followed depending on the value of an individual item:

Estimated Item Value	Total Value of goods or service(s)	Procurement Process
£0 - £4,999	One written quote Consideration of local suppliers must be part of the process	Written confirmation from suppliers which can include web pages advertisements, receipts, e-procurement order etc. Best value for money must be obtained and reasonable care must be taken to obtain goods, works or services of adequate quality at a competitive price. A documented record to support the decision must be retained for audit purposes.
£5,000 - £24,999	A minimum of 4 quotations to be sought and at least 2 received. Consideration of local suppliers must be part of the process.	Formal written quotation. Sell2wales Quick Quotes to be considered.
£25,000 - £106,046 (Goods & Services)	A minimum of 5 quotations to be sought and at least 3 received Consideration of local suppliers must be part of the process.	Either a) Formal written quotation. Sell2wales Quick Quotes to be considered. Or b) A full tender process conducted through etenderwales

Evidence of expenditure must be provided by submitting paid invoices/receipts and bank statements showing payments.

9. Permissions and Consents

It is a requirement of the applicant to ensure all necessary permissions and consents (e.g. planning permission, licenses, or landlord consent) are in place where required. The applicant is wholly responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the scheme are in compliance. **Failure to do so may result in no grant being paid or re-claimed.**

If your project requires permissions or consents, you can still apply but you will need to explain your timetable for obtaining them in your application.

10. Subsidy Control

A subsidy is where a public authority provides support to an enterprise that gives them an economic advantage. If UKSPF money is used to provide a subsidy, expenditure must be compliant with the UK's obligations on subsidy control. The Subsidy Control Act 2022 replaces previous EU State Aid and came into effect on 4 January 2023. It is a requirement for Public Authorities to record on a Transparency information all relevant subsidies.

All applications that have the potential to be a subsidy must consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control principles, as per UK Government guidance. All applicants must establish if the direct award of funds could constitute a subsidy. Small scale awards can be managed under the threshold for Minimal Amounts of Financial Assistance (MFA). This sets a limit of £315,000 of assistance over a three-year period, which can be given to organisations operating in a competitive market. Please advise of any other De minimis aid (previous support under State Aid) or MFA support received during your current and previous two fiscal years, as we need to check that our support added to that previously received, will not exceed the threshold. Please note support can not only be in the form of a grant but also assistance such as free or subsidised consultancy services, marketing advice etc. If you are in any doubt about whether previous assistance received classes as De minimis or a subsidy please include it.

If the award falls outside the MFA it must be determined whether the award of UKSPF is a potential subsidy (as defined by the UK Subsidy Control Regime). We ask you to undertake a self-assessment. Please provide a rationale for the four criteria outlined in the application form. To determine whether this is a subsidy, ALL four criteria have to be met. You will also need to confirm how you intend to comply with the UK's subsidy control regime. It is also important to confirm whether any subsidy will be passed on via delivery of activities to end beneficiaries i.e. other organisations involved in economic activity.

Further information is available on the UK Government website [guidance](#).

11. How will applications be assessed?

Criterion	Weighting
Project Proposal and Strategic Fit – UKSPF Cynnal y Cardi fund and local/regional Strategies and plans, impact of project on community	30
Deliverability – including milestones, risks, due diligence, experience	20
Match funding and evidence of Match funding	10
Efficiency and effectiveness –value for money, monitoring, evaluation and exit strategy	20
Realistic outputs/outcomes	20
Total	100

Applications will be considered by the Grants Assessment panel. Decisions made by the Assessment Panel will be final and subject to the funding available. Each application will be scored using the following range:

Scale	30 point weighting	20 point weighting	10 point weighting
Exceptional	25-30	17-20	9-10
Very Strong	19-25	13-16	7-8
Adequate with strong elements outweighing the weak elements	12-19	9-12	5-6
Adequate with weak elements outweighing the strong elements	7-12	5-8	3-4
Unsatisfactory	1-6	1-4	1-2

12. Grant Offer and Acceptance

Successful applications will be invited to enter into a grant agreement with Ceredigion County Council. This will explain when a project can start and all terms and conditions including any project specific conditions.

When a grant is approved, an offer letter will be sent to the applicant. If a grant is offered, it must be formally accepted by the applicant. This must occur within 10 working days of the date of the grant offer letter and before any work commences. The works shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the approved application and any other relevant requirements or conditions that are deemed necessary. The County Council must always be notified immediately of any changes to an activity. This might involve changes to the timing or the financing of the activity. All changes must be agreed in writing by the County Council.

Once the grant activity is completed, the applicant must submit a claim form with copy invoices and defrayment evidence of the total cost of the activity. Once approved, payment will be made to the applicants account via a BACS transfer. All invoices must have been paid from the named bank account of the applicant.

Please note: Output evidence will be monitored by the Council over a period of twelve months of the grant being paid.

13. Publicity

All successful applicants will need to acknowledge they have received support from the Cynnal y Cardi Supporting Local Business Fund in all publicity documents, media coverage, signage etc. More information on branding and guidance can be found on the following document:



CYC Branding and
Publicity Guidance E \