

GUIDANCE NOTES

COMMUNITY AWARDS PROGRAMME (THEMATIC FUNDING)

For grants between £2,501 and £25,000



ACCESSIBILITY

Please contact us to discuss any specific communications needs you may have.

OUR EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

- Promoting accessibility
- Valuing cultural diversity; promoting participation
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting inclusive communities
- Reducing disadvantage and exclusion.

OUR MISSION

Helping the Island community and people most in need.

OUR VALUES

We have identified three values that underpin our work:

- Being supportive and helpful
- Making best use of Lottery money
- Using knowledge and evidence.

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THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO HELP YOU WHEN APPLYING

We update our programmes from time to time, so if you have had this guide for more than three months, contact us or visit our website to check that you have the most up to date version. We published this version in September 2026.

Call us with any questions you may have on [0800 047 0036](tel:08000470036) or email us at grants@mlt.org.im

You can also visit our website at www.mlt.org.im

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

READ THIS GUIDE

This guide will enable you to understand if we are able to fund your organisation and project, and will help you complete the application form. It also provides information on how we assess your application, and what happens next if you are successful.

COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION FORM

Send your application to us at least four months before your project is due to start to allow us to process your application in time. We will only consider one application from your organisation at a time. If you are a current grant holder you need to have satisfactorily met all our grant monitoring requirements before applying again.

We will acknowledge receipt of your application within five working days of it being received. If your application is not complete it will be returned to you and you will have 10 working days to send us the missing information.

WE ASSESS YOUR APPLICATION

For how we assess your application please see page 12 of this guide.

During assessment by the grants team, we will read through the application and prepare it for a meeting where the Trustees will consider and make a decision on your application. We may need to ask you some questions to plug any knowledge gaps, so we can present the best possible case for you. The extra questions we come up with are not generic but will be unique to your application and should lead to a stronger chance of success.

Assessment allows you to build a relationship with us through personal contact.

It also allows us to keep our application form shorter and less daunting. At this stage we can give you a definite date for the Trustee meeting so you know when a decision is going to be made.

WE TELL YOU OUR DECISION

We aim to have a decision to you within ten weeks of receiving a complete application.

If your application is successful we will send you a conditional offer letter. We will ask you to accept our terms and conditions, and to provide the supporting documentation described in the "What we will ask you to send us" section on page 16 of this guide.

If you do not do this within the deadline included in your conditional offer letter, we will withdraw our conditional grant offer.

If the documents are satisfactory we will send you a grant confirmation letter, which will tell you how we will pay the grant. We will also tell you when you can announce it to the press and media.

If the documents are not satisfactory or we require further information, we will contact you if we think this is something you can resolve. If there is a major problem or something that cannot be resolved, we will withdraw our conditional grant offer and tell you the reasons why.

If your application is unsuccessful, we will write to you and tell you why.

START YOUR PROJECT

You can start your project once you receive our letter confirming the grant.

FINISHING YOUR PROJECT

You must complete your project within 12 months of the date of our letter confirming the grant, unless, by exception, the Trustees have awarded a grant over a longer period.

You will be asked to complete an end of grant report telling us how the grant has been spent and what was achieved.

We may visit or telephone you, or ask to see original receipts to check how the grant was spent.

COMMUNITY AWARDS (THEMATIC FUNDING)

Community Awards (Thematic Funding) is a grants programme which helps to improve communities and the lives of people most in need.

IS COMMUNITY AWARDS (THEMATIC FUNDING) RIGHT FOR YOU?

Do you need between £2,501 and £25,000?

(For grants between £300 and £2,500, please refer to our Smaller Grants Programme.)

- Are you a charity, voluntary or community organisation, school, a parish or town council or a social enterprise on the Isle of Man?
- Do you have an IOM-based bank account in the name of your organisation and financial procedures, that both require at least two people who are unrelated and do not live at the same address to sign cheques or make a withdrawal?
- Will your project benefit people living on the Isle of Man?
- Will your project be complete within one year and can you send your application at least four months before your project starts?
- The programme will not give more than £25,000, in one or more grants, to an organisation in any one year period. If you have an active grant with us, you'll not be able to apply for more funding. You'll need to have sent us all monitoring information including the End of Grant report and have received a letter confirming that your grant has been closed before you may apply again.

If you answered yes to all these questions, then Community Awards (Thematic Funding) could be right for you.

Please note that, by exception, the Trustees may be able to award a grant over a period up to 36 months. Before applying, please ring us for guidance.

If you are an individual or sole trader, profit-making organisation, statutory organisation (other than those listed above) or an organisation not established in the Isle of Man, then the Community Awards (Thematic Funding) programme is unable to fund you.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ARTS, SPORTS AND HERITAGE PROJECTS

We suggest before applying to us you enquire about possible funding from the relevant funding area, e.g. Isle of Man Arts Council, Isle of Man Sport or Culture Vannin, via your governing body, if appropriate.

You must be able to evidence a community need which addresses the particular issues the beneficiaries are experiencing.

Community Awards (Thematic Funding) will only pay for projects related to the arts, sport or heritage where the main purpose of the project meets one or more of the outcomes on page 12 of this guide, which are about improving communities, skills, health or the environment.

WHO CAN APPLY?

You can apply to Community Awards (Thematic Funding) if you are a:

- charity
- school
- voluntary and community organisation
- parish or town council

We are unlikely to fund organisations that are in poor financial health or those that have had a previous grant from us which has not been managed satisfactorily. The organisation filling in the form must be the same organisation that will receive the grant and manage the project. We will not consider an application made by one organisation on behalf of another.

Please note our processes have changed and we now require all organisations including schools and other statutory bodies to provide us with the following:

- home addresses and dates of birth for all contacts
- financial information
- the date the organisation was established

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Voluntary and community organisations are also known as 'third sector' organisations, as they are separate from the public and private sectors.

Such organisations are motivated by the desire to achieve social goals rather than profit and reinvest any surpluses to help tackle issues facing people and the environment.

They include:

- Registered and unregistered charities
- Friendly societies
- Not-for-profit companies
- Cooperatives
- Industrial and provident societies
- Not-for-profit unincorporated associations

To apply for Community Awards (Thematic Funding), voluntary and community organisations must have:

- A written governing document (for example a constitution, memorandum and articles of association, set of rules or trust deed)
- At least three unrelated people on their board of directors (companies including community interest companies)
- At least three unrelated trustees on their governing body (charities)
- At least three unrelated people on their governing body (cooperatives, friendly societies, unincorporated and unregistered not-for-profit associations)

We expect organisations with a membership to be open to all and allow anyone to join, unless there is a good reason why this is not appropriate.

APPLICATIONS FROM SCHOOLS

We welcome applications from schools or other educational establishments but we will not pay for activities or service that schools have a statutory responsibility to provide, for example, curriculum based activities, or any activity taking place during curriculum time.

We expect the project to take place before or after school, during lunch time or in the holidays unless you can provide us with a good reason in your application why this is not possible.

APPLICATIONS FROM BRANCHES OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Independent branches of larger organisations can apply directly to us. They must have their own governing document and be allowed to manage funds and staff without referring to another body.

Dependent branches can also apply directly to us if they:

- Have their own governing document (or have adopted the parent organisation's governing document); **and**
- Produce their own annual accounts (which may be included in the parent organisation's annual report); **and**
- Have their own bank account in the legal name of their organisation as shown on their governing document and are responsible for this account and how the funds are spent.

If we offer a dependent branch a grant, we will ask the parent organisation to accept overall responsibility for it.

For other dependent branches where there is less local control, the parent organisation will need to apply. If you are a branch and you are unsure whether you can apply, please contact us.

WHAT WILL WE PAY FOR?

You can apply for between £2,501 and £25,000 to pay for some or all of your project costs. The Community Awards (Thematic Funding) programme will not give more than £25,000 to an organisation in any one year period.

There are some things we are unable to pay for and these are shown below.

WHAT CAN'T WE FUND?

- activities that happen or start before we confirm our grant
- any costs you incur when putting together your application
- any expenditure incurred or committed before we confirm our grant (including deposits)
- day-to-day running costs of your organisation (for example, utility bills, council tax, rent, insurance); apart from a small amount to help start your project (by exception)
- contingency costs
- endowments (to provide a source of income)
- existing activities and repeat or regular events, including those we have funded before. However, we will fund these activities or events if they are to be run with new beneficiary types or in a new area
- fundraising activities for your organisation or others
- items that mainly benefit individuals (for example equipment that is not shared). This can also include industry specific courses that are level 3 and above
- items that are purchased on behalf of another organisation
- land, building, refurbishment, landscaping or property projects (including playgrounds and temporary buildings) costing more than £50,000 (including VAT)
- land or building projects where the ownership or lease is not yet in place (including any planning permissions)
- loans or interest payments
- ongoing staff costs (including salaries of permanent or fixed term staff); apart from a small amount to help start your project (by exception)
- political or religious activities
- projects where it is considered that assistance may have been received from a third party for their own commercial benefit
- projects or activities that the state has a legal obligation to provide
- projects that you cannot maintain because of high ongoing costs or the need for specialist skills
- projects that cannot be completed within 12 months of the date of the letter confirming the grant
- projects that take place outside of the Isle of Man
- purchase of alcohol
- routine repairs
- maintenance
- used vehicles
- VAT that you can recover
- projects where the main purpose is to increase participation in sports, arts or heritage rather than address the particular issues beneficiaries are experiencing

FUNDING FOR YOUR PROJECT FROM OTHER SOURCES

If your project costs are more than you are requesting from Community Awards (Thematic Funding) and you need to raise funds from other sources, you must be able to show that this will not delay your project.

VAT

You may need to pay VAT on purchases you make as part of your project. You must only include VAT in the amount you request from us if you cannot claim it back. If you later find that you can recover VAT that we have included on our grant, you must pay this amount to us.

LAND AND BUILDINGS

Projects involving work on land or a building (including refurbishment) can be complicated and take time to complete. We need to be sure that you can complete your project within 12 months of the date of the letter confirming the grant.

So, if you need planning permission, you must have it before you apply. You also need to own the freehold of the land or building, or hold a lease that cannot be ended by the landlord for at least five years. This should also be in place before applying to us.

HOW WE ASSESS APPLICATIONS

COMPLETE APPLICATIONS

If we receive an incomplete application, this will be returned to you, which could cause a delay to your application. You will be given 10 working days to send us the missing information. Some helpful tips on completing the form are listed below:

- the main and senior contacts should be different people and unrelated
- the senior contact must be in an appropriate position as outlined in the application form
- the date of birth must be completed for all contacts to allow us to complete our standard fraud prevention checks
- home addresses must be provided for all contacts including those provided for schools and statutory organisations
- each contact must provide a telephone number
- Question 5, concerning accounts, should be fully completed. If you are a new organisation which has been running for less than 15 months, you should provide a projection of your income and expenditure and include the amount you are requesting from us
- the budget table in Question 12 should be completed in full, including totals and the amount you are requesting from us
- income and expenditure figures need to be completed by all applicants.
- Please remember when submitting an application that we kindly request quotes for your project, sometimes multiple depending on the value of your project. We ask for:
 - 1 quote if your project is less than £5,000
 - 2 quotes if your project is up to £10,000
 - 3 quotes if your project is more than £10,000.

We will aim to have a decision to you within 10 weeks of receiving a complete application. We will require further information from you before payment of your grant.

Remember you must not start your project until:

- **we have received, checked and approved the documentation you send us**
- **you have received a grant confirmation letter from us**

THE COMMUNITY AWARDS (THEMATIC FUNDING) OUTCOMES

The three outcomes below are the differences we want our funding to make.

- Build strong relationships in and across communities
- Improve the places and spaces that matter to communities
- Help more people to reach their potential by supporting them at the earliest possible stage.

During our assessment we will consider how well your project meets our outcomes.

- You must show how your project meets at least one of them to be considered for a grant.

We will also look at the following factors to help us reach a decision:

- the need for your project
- who will benefit
- how you will achieve our outcomes
- if we have funded you before
- your organisation's income
- the total project cost (which should not exceed £250,000)

At times we find we do not have enough funds to support all the applications we would like to. When this happens we need to make some difficult decisions. We have a scoring system which helps us do this. More points are given to applications that:

- show strong evidence of need
- seek to involve as wide a range of people as possible
- meet more of our outcomes
- are from organisations that Community Awards (Thematic Funding) has not funded before
- are from organisations with a smaller annual income for smaller projects.

We aim to assess each application equally and fairly.

- Our Trustees' approve the final decisions.
- All decisions on applications are final.

Please do not try to influence the decision by lobbying Officers of the Manx Lottery Trust directly or indirectly. If you do, we will reject your application.

POLICIES AND INSURANCES

PROJECTS WORKING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS

If you are applying for a project to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, you must have a policy that explains how you will make sure they will be safe. It is your responsibility to have acceptable safeguarding policies and procedures in place which we may ask to inspect at any time if we offer you a grant.

INSURANCE AND SAFETY

Depending on the type of project, you may need public liability insurance or qualified leaders. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have adequate insurance in place.

This should include cover for any assets you buy or events and activities you run using our grant. We may ask to look at these policies at any time.

Your organisation must be affiliated to a governing body if your project involves a dangerous sport or activity.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We expect projects to be open to all who want to be involved, unless you can give a good reason why this should not be the case.

If you plan to restrict who can take part you should explain why in your application, so that we can consider whether this is acceptable.

Your application should show your commitment to our equality principles, which are stated on page 1.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE OFFER YOU A GRANT?

If we offer you a grant we need you to confirm what you told us in your application before we will pay the grant to you. This means that our grant offer is conditional on you and a senior contact from your organisation signing and returning our offer letter, accepting our terms and conditions of grant and sending us documents that allow us to check how your organisation is run.

You must return everything we have asked for within 15 working days from the date of our offer letter, otherwise we will withdraw our conditional grant offer. (By exception, we may agree a short extension if you contact us before our deadline and there is a good reason. This must be confirmed in writing by MLT.)

CONFIRMING OUR GRANT

You cannot start your project until we have received, checked and approved the signed offer letter and any other additional documents we may ask for. If everything you send us meets our requirements we will send you a grant confirmation letter telling you when we will pay the grant and when you can announce it to the press and media. You can then start your project.

WITHDRAWING OUR OFFER

If what you send is unsatisfactory we will contact you if we think you may be able to resolve the problem. If there is a major problem or something that cannot be resolved, we will withdraw our conditional grant offer and write to you telling you the reasons why. You can send us a new application but before you do, you must address the reason why we withdrew our grant offer. We will assess any new application on its merits, in competition with others, so it may not be successful.

MONITORING YOUR GRANT

If we fund your project we will need you to complete an end of grant report to confirm how the grant has been spent and what you achieved. Please make sure that you get receipts for all the items or services you buy with the grant and that you keep them somewhere safe as we may ask you to provide them. We may also visit you to check how the grant has been spent. Please keep us up to date if your project or any of your contact details change at any stage of your grant.

WHAT WE WILL ASK YOU TO SEND US

Before you apply, make sure you can provide the following information if we make a conditional grant offer.

We will confirm what we need from you in our offer letter and will include a checklist. You cannot start your project until we have received, checked and approved everything we ask for. What we will ask for depends on the type of organisation you are.

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

- We will need a copy of your organisations latest approved annual accounts, signed and dated by your chair, secretary or treasurer and by your auditor or independent examiner, where appropriate. If your organisation has been running for less than 15 months, you may not be able to give us this so in these cases we will accept a 12-month financial projection for the year when you will spend the grant.
- We will send you a Bank details form, which you must complete and return to us to provide the details of the account you want any funding paid to. Please ensure that the bank account you provide meets the requirements set out on page 16 of this guidance.
- Unless you are a registered charity or company limited by guarantee (or a registered charity that is also a company limited by guarantee) we will need a copy of your organisations governing document, constitution or set of rules. If you are a branch of a larger organisation that has management and financial control over your work we will need a letter, signed by a senior officer from the larger organisation, confirming their support for your application and accepting overall responsibility for it. We may contact you to ask for details of an independent referee, someone independent of your organisation but who knows its work well. If we need an independent referee, we will explain our requirements when we contact you.

PARISH OR TOWN COUNCILS

- We will send you a Bank details form which you must complete and return to us to provide the details of the account you want any funding paid to. Please ensure that the bank account you provide meets the requirements set out on page 16 of this guidance.
- We may ask you to send a copy of your latest accounts or audit report.

SCHOOLS

- We will send you a Bank details form which you must complete and return to us to provide the details of the account you want any funding paid to. Please ensure that the bank account you provide meets the requirements set out on page 16 of this guidance.

We have published a separate guide to accepting a conditional grant offer that explains these requirements in more detail. You can get this from our website. Please read it before you apply, to check that you will be able to send us everything we need.

OUR BANK ACCOUNT REQUIREMENTS

- You must have an Isle of Man based bank account in the name of the organisation that submits the application to us and will carry out the project, that requires at least two people who are unrelated and do not live at the same address to sign cheques or authorise withdrawals.
- We may ask you to open a new and separate account that will be used only for our funding.

IF YOUR APPLICATION IS UNSUCCESSFUL

We consider all applications in competition with each other and we know that you will be disappointed if we decide not to offer you a grant.

If your application is not successful we will write to you telling you the reasons why. Please consider our reasons carefully before deciding whether to apply again. Since we seldom have enough funds to support all the applications we would like to, if you send us the same application again our experience is that it is also likely to be unsuccessful.

Your time may be better spent seeking funds from other sources. We suggest you only apply again for the same project if you can make a much stronger case.

CUSTOMER CARE

We aim to be efficient, polite and supportive in everything we do.

If you think we have treated you unfairly, made mistakes or given you the wrong advice, we have a complaints procedure. You can get this from our website.

You may be disappointed if we turn down your application, but you cannot use the complaints procedure to appeal against our decision if we have followed our procedures correctly.

Making a complaint will not affect your chances of getting a grant from us and it will not affect the level of service you receive.

DATA PROTECTION AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

DATA PROTECTION

We will use the information you give us during assessment and during the life of your grant (if awarded) to administer and analyse grants and for our own research purposes. We may give copies of all or some of this information to individuals and organisations we consult when assessing applications, administering the programme, monitoring grants and evaluating funding processes and impacts. These organisations may include accountants, external evaluators and other organisations or groups involved in delivering the project.

We may share information with organisations and individuals with a legitimate interest in Lottery applications and grants or specific funding programmes. We have a duty to protect public funds and for that reason we may also share information with other Lottery distributors, government departments, organisations providing matched funding or for the prevention and detection of crime.

We might use personal information provided by you in order to conduct appropriate identity checks. Personal information that you provide may be disclosed to a credit reference or fraud prevention agency, which may keep a record of that information.

If you provide false or inaccurate information in your application or at any point in the life of any funding we award to you and fraud is identified, we will provide details to fraud prevention agencies, to prevent fraud and money laundering.

We might use the data you provide for research purposes. We recognise the need to maintain the confidentiality of vulnerable groups and their details will not be made public in any way, except as required by law.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Freedom of Information legislation gives members of the public the right to request any information held. This includes information received from third parties, such as, although not limited to, grant applicants, grant holders, contractors and people making a complaint.

If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (UK) we will release it, to the extent to which requests under the Act extend to information held in the Isle of Man, subject to exemptions, although we may consult with you first.

Please note that the Manx Lottery Trust is not included within Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2015 (Isle of Man).

If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release if requested, you should let us know when you apply.

