



Local Events Open Fund

Overview

Background

In February 2025, the City of Edinburgh Council approved the city's revised [Events Strategy](#), covering the period from 2025 to 2030. The revised strategy forms an important part of the delivery of the [Citywide Culture Strategy](#), which places Edinburgh residents at the heart of the plans for the cultural landscape. The strategy aims to allow all Edinburgh residents to access meaningful cultural experiences and to develop Edinburgh's reputation as a welcoming and environmentally sustainable city which is known as a place for creative practitioners to develop their careers.

To support the aims of the Edinburgh Events Strategy, the City of Edinburgh Council approved the launch of the Local Events Open Fund. This fund underlines the Council's commitment to the local creative sector and will support events that demonstrate commitment to communities, display environmental responsibility and apply fair work and equality, diversity and inclusion principles. Priority will be given to events held outside of Ward 11 but not to the exclusion of those held in central Edinburgh. The Council welcomes applications from a range of event disciplines and would encourage applicants to explore all funding options to ensure that the Local Events Open fund is the most appropriate.

Key Information

- The total value of the Local Events Open Fund is £175,000
- The Local Events Open Fund has three tiers:
 - Tier 1. To support events of larger scale with grants of up to £20,000 – total £60,000 (34% of the Local Events Open Fund)
 - Tier 2. To support events of medium scale with grants of up to £12,000 – total £72,000 (41% of the Local Events Open Fund)
 - Tier 3. To support events of smaller scale with grants of up to £5,000 – total £43,000 (25% of the Local Events Open Fund)
- The Local Events Open Fund is unable to accept applications from existing projects or events that are already funded for similar or identical activity by the City of Edinburgh Council or those already in receipt of City of Edinburgh Council funding exceeding £50,000 per annum.
- Consortia of organisations may apply but only one application per organisation / group will be considered.
- Both new and established events will be considered for this fund, with a review of events after year 1.
- Events should be held between 1 July 2025 and 31 March 2026.
 - Funding for the financial year 2026/27 will be launched early in 2026 to ensure those who have been unable to apply for the first year of this fund will have the opportunity to apply.
 - The City of Edinburgh Council acknowledges that events held in the first half of 2025 would not have been able to apply for the Local Events Open Fund in 2025/26. In order to maintain fairness to all organisers, multi-year funding applications will not be offered for 2025/26 but will be accepted from 2026/27.
- Successful organisations will have the opportunity to work with [Culture for Climate Scotland](#) to evaluate their event and create an action plan to promote the sustainability, in line with the Council's aims of becoming carbon-neutral by 2030.

Purpose of Fund

The Local Events Open Fund aims to contribute to the delivery of the [Edinburgh Events Strategy 2025-2030](#). The Events Strategy is comprised of eight strategic aims:

1. Support and prioritise local festivals and events
2. Commit to sustainability
3. Provide multiyear funding
4. Widen geographical reach
5. Deliver Edinburgh's Culture Strategy
6. Streamline processes
7. Focus less on peripatetic events
8. Demonstrate value

This funding has been allocated to strengthen the offering of events within the city that are unique to Edinburgh and to develop the local events sector. The Local Events Open Fund also aims to reduce some of the financial barriers to events held in under-utilised spaces outwith the city centre.

Scoring Criteria

The Council will select events to be part of this portfolio if they meet criteria 1 to 4, and at least one criterion from 5 to 12.

Score	Description
0	Response missing or unacceptable. No clear response to criteria in the submission.
1	Marginal response. The submission provides low level of confidence that the criteria would be delivered in a satisfactory way.
2	Acceptable response. The submission provides a moderate level of confidence that the criteria would be delivered in a satisfactory way.
3	Good response. The submission provides a good level of confidence that the criteria would be delivered.
4	Excellent response. The submission provides a high level of confidence that the criteria would be delivered or exceeded.

1. Demonstrate clear benefits for communities either through access to cultural provision, participation or celebration (Mandatory requirement)
2. Spread of events – prioritising events outside of the city centre (Scoring criteria above)
3. Apply fair work and equality, diversity and inclusion principles (Mandatory requirement)
4. Demonstrate environmental responsibility (Mandatory requirement)

In addition, events must satisfy at least one of the following criteria:

5. Be established in Edinburgh or a unique Edinburgh festival or event (Scored 0 to 4)
6. Complement the calendar of events – priority will be given to events which are held in February to May and September to November (Scoring criteria above)
7. Employ a diverse range of local creative and cultural practitioners (Scored 0 to 4)
8. Celebrate the diversity of the city (Scored 0 to 4)
9. Enhance the wellbeing of residents through participation (Scored 0 to 4)
10. Develop the voluntary sector (Scored 0 to 4)
11. Collaborate with other organisations in the creative sector (Scored 0 to 4)
12. Enhance the global reputation of Edinburgh (Scored 0 to 4)

Tier 1 – grants of up to £20,000 – total available: £60,000 (34% of the Local Events Open Fund)

- Must satisfy scoring criteria 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- Must satisfy at least four additional criteria from 6 to 12

Tier 2 – grants of up to £12,000 – total available: £72,000 (41% of Local Events Open Fund)

- Must satisfy scoring criteria 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Must satisfy at least two additional criterion from 5 to 12

Tier 3 – grants of up to £5,000 – total available: £43,000 (25% of Local Events Open Fund)

- Must satisfy scoring criteria 1 to 4
- Must satisfy at least one criteria from 5 to 12

Applications will be categorised into the three tiers of funding available. Each applicant will be independently scored and sorted into numerical order with funding awarded to the highest scoring applicants until the budget for each tier is fully allocated. The assessment panel will have no prior knowledge of applicants before the assessment period.

What will be funded?

The prevailing aim of the Local Events Open Fund is to provide stability and support to the Edinburgh events sector. As such, funding can be utilised for the following:

- Direct festival/event costs – production, programming, venue/equipment hire, marketing, community engagement, staffing, etc.
- Capacity building and professional development – training, development, well-being and support programmes, coaching, mentoring etc.
- Business development – recruitment, additional expertise, exploring other models for creation, collaboration and mobility.
- Audience development and community engagement – capacity building for inclusion.
- Digital capability – development of infrastructure, access to software, developing accessibility.

Funding must not be used to fund international travel or events held primarily outside Edinburgh.

City of Edinburgh Council References

- [2050 Edinburgh City Vision](#)
- [City of Edinburgh Council – 2030 Climate Strategy](#)
- [City of Edinburgh Council – Business Plan 2023-2027](#)
- [City of Edinburgh Council – Edinburgh Events Strategy 2025-30](#)
- [City of Edinburgh Council – Equality and Diversity Framework 2021-25](#)

Other City of Edinburgh Council Funding

- [Community Grants Fund](#) – Funding available to support constituted groups for local community activity.
- [Diversity and Inclusion Fund](#) – Funding to support diverse artists and creatives to further their careers within the culture sector.
- [Sports Events Fund](#) – Grant funding available to support events which promote physical activity and sport within Edinburgh (participatory).
- [Strategic Partnership Funding Programme](#) – Multi-year funding to provide stability to the sector and support job retention, creative practice development, programming and delivery of activity within the culture sector.

Next Steps



If you have any questions regarding this fund or require additional information, please email events@edinburgh.gov.uk

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

These are the City of Edinburgh Council's (Council) standard conditions for the award of grant funding.

The Council provides grant funding to third parties to improve social, environmental, health and well-being and economic outcomes for Edinburgh's citizens and communities. The Council is committed to working in partnership with third party organisations, to ensure the agreed outcomes / objectives related to this funding are delivered.

If you want to be considered for a Council grant, you must be willing to accept the following conditions (Please note that there may be additional conditions applied by the specific Council service making individual grant awards):

1 General

- 1.1 You must provide confirmation that your organisation is properly constituted i.e. a set of rules. You will be asked to provide a copy of your constitution to the Council and where appropriate your organisation's Memorandums & Articles or equivalent.
- 1.2 You must only use Council funds for the purposes agreed with the Council, as stated in your Funding Agreement, or as agreed in writing by the Council and these should be treated as restricted funds in your organisation's accounts.
- 1.3 All organisations are expected to have the following in place:
 - suitable operational and financial management practices;
 - proven effective organisational governance;
 - auditable record keeping systems; and
 - relevant employment, equalities, rights, and sustainability policies.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

2 Sound Financial Practice

- 2.1 Your financial accounting practices should meet as a minimum the essential elements and requirements of the [Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator](#) (OSCR) unless otherwise agreed by the Council.
- 2.2 If your grant is more than £10,000 annually, you will need to submit to the Council financial information as required by OSCR or where this is not available such other information as agreed by the Council. This financial information should be returned each financial year, either by 30 December or such other date as agreed with the relevant service area providing funding.
- 2.3 If your grant is below £10,000 annually, you will need to submit records and receipts to demonstrate that the Council funds were used as indicated within your Funding Agreement. This information should be returned for the previous financial year, either by 31 July or another date set by the relevant service area providing funding.
- 2.4 Failure by an organisation to submit the required financial information or annual performance report on request may seriously jeopardise any future funding relationship with the Council.
- 2.5 The organisation's record-keeping and management practices should be of a good standard compliant with the [Public Records \(Scotland\) Act 2011](#).

3 Monitoring the use of Council funds

- 3.1 The Council service area providing funding and the funded organisation will each nominate a contact person in respect of the grant to:
 - be the initial point of contact on matters relating to their funding relationship; and
 - ensure that the agreed monitoring and review processes are effectively managed.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

- 3.2 The Council service area's nominated officer, for the purposes of the Funding Agreement, the Grant Monitoring Officer (GMO), will be entitled to attend the organisation's Board/Committee meetings subject to giving advance notice and in an observer capacity and where the GMO requests must be provided with minutes and or board papers of such meetings.
- 3.3 The Council is committed to the principles of collaboration and co-production. Co-production means the real and meaningful involvement of the citizens of Edinburgh and recipients of services in delivering better outcomes. For the purposes of co-production and improving the service, the GMO may meet with service users for feedback sessions. As a grant recipient you are encouraged to communicate effectively and to work together with recipients of services and communities of interest to achieve and improve outcomes.
- 3.4 Performance in relation to the Funding Agreement will be reviewed annually through a variety of means and may involve at least one meeting per year for this purpose. The Council should be provided with a written report covering achievements against the Funding Agreement and detailing any outstanding plans for use of the grant.
- 3.5 If your grant is for more than £10,000 per annum, you will be required to provide an annual financial and performance report which shall include, outcomes, impacts and outputs delivered annually as a result of receiving the grant as detailed and agreed as part of the Funding Application. User satisfaction levels.
- Performance against targets set in Funding Agreement
 - Volunteering and paid staff hours
 - Additional funding received
- 3.6 If any Council funds contribute to an organisation's financial reserves, these must be accounted for as restricted reserves. Where possible, an organisation should continue the general good practice guidance of maintaining non-earmarked reserves equal to three months' operating expenditure.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

- 3.7 If an organisation is winding up, the GMO must be consulted about any proposals to distribute surpluses and assets. Any unspent Council funding must be returned before any distribution is commenced. Approval may be sought from the Council to use unspent funding to meet outstanding commitments such as salaries, rents and costs incurred in winding up etc.

4 Climate Change and Protecting the Environment

- 4.1 Climate Change is considered the biggest threat facing humanity which is why the City of Edinburgh has declared a climate emergency. The Council's [2030 Climate Strategy](#) calls upon our third sector partners and funded organisations to support the Council's net zero pledge for 2030. It also sets out the action city partners and citizens are asked to support the city's transition to net zero. Your organisation is asked to help deliver the city's net zero commitment by completing carbon reduction plans when requested by the Council, by signing up to the [Edinburgh Climate Compact](#) or similar sector-appropriate sustainability alliances as is appropriate given the size and nature of the organisation and by pledging to reduce your emissions. If your organisation is operating in the culture sector the Council requests that you sign the [Green Arts Charter](#) and adhere to the pledges.
- 4.2 You will ideally have in place, or will develop policies and practices that should minimise any detrimental environmental impacts and complement the Council's commitment to protecting and improving Edinburgh's environment for current and future generations. Resources to support local organisations with their transition can be found on the [Net Zero Edinburgh website](#)
- 4.3 In recognition that food systems are a key driver of the climate crisis, the Council is a signatory to the global Plant-Based treaty campaign. To support this commitment the Council asks grant recipients, when catering for events or providing packed lunches, to provide vegetarian and/or vegan options, redistribute food left-overs where possible to reduce food waste and recycle waste generated during these events.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

5 Equalities

5.1 Your organisation must have a commitment to mainstream equalities and rights in accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#). Both in terms of its practices employing staff and volunteers and in providing services, you should be able to show how your organisation:

- advances equality of opportunity;
- fosters good relations; and
- eliminates any unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

5.2 If service users or prospective service users ask, you must produce information in accessible formats (e.g. tape, disk format, Braille, large print (18 or 36 point) and community languages). Records of requests for accessible formats should be kept and shared with the GMO at Funding Agreement meetings.

6 Staff and Volunteers

6.1 If your activities involve children and adults at risk, you must:

- vet staff and volunteers using the national disclosure scheme and provide written confirmation that this has been carried out;
- train staff and volunteers to communicate effectively with clients and be aware of relevant safety issues;
- follow the policies and procedures for making the Council aware of [any abuse or neglect](#); and
- be aware of and follow the Prevent Duty Guidance for Scotland. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-scotland>

Copies of procedures which may offer a useful framework, such as [Safer Recruitment Through Better Recruitment](#), are available from your supporting service area.

6.2 Vacancies for posts, funded (or contributed to) by the Council grant, covering six months' duration or longer, should be publicly advertised. Advertising must indicate that the organisation is in receipt of funding from the Council for the post(s) concerned.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

- 6.3 If your activities involve the use of volunteers, volunteer management and support should be of the highest standard in line with the [Investing in Volunteering scheme](#).
- 6.4 If a Council funded post lies vacant for a period of time, funding may be reduced proportionately.
- 6.5 Staff must not be hindered in any efforts to establish trade union recognition in your organisation.

7 Sponsorship and Publicity

- 7.1 If offered sponsorship packages please contact your GMO to check they comply with the Council's Advertising and Sponsorship policy particularly those that could be considered controversial such as tobacco, alcohol, pay day lending or high carbon products or services.
- 7.2 If you produce any publicity or promotional information about your organisation, including information of events or exhibitions, social media activity, recruitment information or annual reports, this material must indicate the Council's support, proportionate to the level of funding being provided. In addition, this proportionally must be reflected when listing any other funders / supporters.
- 7.3 You must adhere to Council procedures relating to the acknowledgement of funding e.g. the Council logo, or the words 'Supported by the City of Edinburgh Council' should always appear on promotional material, websites, online presence, social media, programmes, annual reports and job vacancy advertisements.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

7.4 By prior agreement, the Council and the funded organisation shall be entitled to:

- host promotions, photo calls and press briefing at mutually-convenient times, located within the funded organisation;
- issue press releases regarding areas of the funding relationship at any time throughout the period of the fund; and
- work closely with the Council's Communication Team to identify mutually beneficially promotional opportunities. Your GMO can give you the relevant contact in the Council's Communication Team.

7.5 During the period of funding, any press release or other communications activity which relates to the relationship between a funded organisation and the Council, must be agreed by both parties before being issued. Any releases or other communications activity out-with this period that relate to activity associated with this funding must also reference the Council's support and the opportunity for the inclusion of a Council comment.

7.6 [Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986](#) prohibits the Council from publishing any material that appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party. The same section also prohibits the Council from awarding funding to organisations for this purpose.

8 Funding Terms & the Subsidy Control Act 2022

8.1 Funding agreements cover a single financial year. Where a grant award spans more than one year, this can be referenced in a funding agreement but awards for a second and subsequent year(s) of funding are "in principle" only. Funding agreements are reviewed and renewed annually and grant awards for second or subsequent year(s) are subject to the Council's own financial position as judgement on the satisfactory performance of funded organisations.

8.2 You acknowledge that the Council is bound by Grant Standing Orders and to encourage the future financial sustainability and diversity of funding sources all grant recipients are encouraged where possible to seek and secure alternative sources of funding and to acknowledge that Council grant programmes are subject to the requirement to openly advertise grants to all eligible applicants unless agreed by the relevant Committee.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

- 8.3 Funding will be issued following the agreement of both parties to the Funding Agreement and related signing. The funds will be paid by the Council in the form of direct payment through BACS to the organisation's bank account.
- 8.4 The Funding Agreement will record the pattern of payments to be followed. Payment will be by BACS into the organisation's bank account.
- 8.5 Grant funding provided by the Council may be considered a subsidy under the UK Subsidy Control Regime. Where this is the case, the Council must meet the relevant conditions. There may also be conditions for the grant recipient. Information for beneficiaries can be found on the [UK Government website](#). Further information about the Regime can be found on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

9 Breach, termination and variation of the Funding Agreement

9.1 The Council acting reasonably and proportionately shall have the right to demand immediate repayment by the organisation of the whole grant or any part thereof if there is failure to:

- give appropriate recognition of the Council's support as outlined above;
- comply with all the terms and conditions specified;
- attend, as appropriate, meetings with the Council;
- communicate in advance proposed changes in the Funding Agreement including any inability to meet agreed service delivery outcomes;
- act to meet the agreed targets contained in the Funding Agreement;
- make decisions or operate systems to the standards expected by the Council in managing public funds.

9.2 This agreement will automatically terminate with immediate effect:

- by reason of fundamental breach, unremedied or repeated default on the Funding Agreement conditions;
- following a breach of statutory duty;
- if the funded organisation is in receivership, insolvent or in liquidation;
- if the funded organisation does anything to bring the Council into disrepute.

Based on any of the above, the Council reserves the right to the return of appropriate funds from the organisation.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

- 9.3 To terminate a Funding Agreement, either party must submit a Notice of Termination to the Registered or Head Office of the other party by recorded delivery or registered post.
- 9.4 Any party wishing to vary a Funding Agreement will need to give a minimum of twenty-eight days' notice to the other party or parties of the proposed variation. Any variation shall only be valid if agreed by both parties in writing.

10 Miscellaneous Conditions

- 10.1 For the purpose of this clause 10 the terms “data controller”, “processor” and “personal data” shall have the meaning set out in the Data Protection Legislation.
- 10.2 “Data Protection Legislation” means all applicable laws relating to privacy and the processing of personal data including the [General Data Protection Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679](#) and the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) or any equivalent or similar legislation implemented in the UK following the UK's withdrawal from the European Union.
- 10.3 “Information Legislation” means the [Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#) and the [Environmental Information \(Scotland\) Regulations 2004](#).
- 10.4 You must observe your obligations under the Data Protection Legislation and the Information Legislation, and shall comply with all applicable laws, regulations, best practice and codes of practice.
- 10.5 You acknowledge that the Council is subject to requirements under the Data Protection Legislation and the Information Legislation. Where requested by the Council, you will provide reasonable assistance and cooperation to the Council to assist the Council's compliance with its information disclosure obligations.
- 10.6 On request from the Council you will provide the Council with all such relevant documents and information relating to your data protection policies and procedures.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

- 10.7 You acknowledge that the Council, acting in accordance with the codes of practice issued and revised from time to time relating to the Information Legislation, may disclose information concerning your organisation and this Funding Agreement without consulting you.
- 10.8 You can request that specific information you provide to the Council as part of the Funding Agreement is exempted from disclosure under the Information Legislation. However, no guarantee can be given that the Council can comply with such a request.
- 10.9 You agree that you are the data controller of any personal data processed by you for the funded activities agreed with the Council as stated in the Funding Agreement. You will comply fully with the Information Acts to the extent that they are applicable to you and with the ICO's public guidance for data controllers.
- 10.10 You agree that the Council, its employees and contractors may use personal data which you provide about your staff, partners and participants involved in the activities agreed with the Council in order for the Council to administer and evaluate the grant, and to exercise the Council's rights under the Funding Agreement.
- 10.11 You agree that the Council may share details of the grant, the name of your organisation and any personal data obtained from you with the Scottish Government and that such details may appear on any Government Grants Information System database which is available for search by other funders. You also agree to the Council publishing any details of the grant on the Council's website.
- 10.12 You will ensure that you have adequate insurance including public liability and employer's liability.
- 10.13 You will provide, if requested, evidence that where the award is used to purchase items of equipment, the equipment is adequately insured. In the event of the equipment being lost, stolen or damaged and not replaced, money obtained from the insurance must be paid to the Council.
- 10.14 In the event of items of capital equipment funded by the Council being no longer required, or an organisation with such equipment ceasing to exist, at the discretion of the appropriate Director, the equipment should be returned to the Council.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

10.15 You will notify the Council of any conflict of interest that may reasonably be deemed to affect the impartiality of any member of staff, volunteer, Office Bearer or Board/Management Committee Member on any matter relevant to his or her duties.

10.16 You will provide evidence to the Council that the organisation is working to support the principles of Best Value. These principles include:

- Accountability to service users;
- Transparency in the organisation's decision-making through easily accessible information;
- Demonstration of continuous improvement in the provision of services or activities; and
- Encouraging ownership of the organisation by all stakeholders through effective consultation processes.

10.17 The Council will not approve grants for projects whose members have been involved in activity deemed to be inappropriate by the Council e.g. fraud, criminal activity or breach of workforce regulations.

11 Fair Work Practices / Living Wage Foundation Rate

11.1 The Council expects funded organisations to adopt policies which comply with [Fair Work First](#) practices. Fair and equal pay, including the Living Wage, is a positive factor and one of the clearest ways in which a funded organisation can demonstrate that it adopts fair work policies.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

11.2A The Council has committed to paying the [Living Wage Foundation Rate](#) and therefore encourages funded organisations to do the same.

OR

11.2 B [Where funded organisations are awarded a public sector grant on or after 1 July 2023 which is funding from the Scottish Government but disbursed by the Council (referred to as flow-through grant funding) the funded organisation will be required to pay at least the real Living Wage or demonstrate that it is working towards paying everyone directly engaged in delivering the grant-funded activity, whether they are subcontractors or agency staff, at least the real Living Wage within the next financial year ending 31 March. In accordance with the [Scottish Government's Fair Work First Guidance](#) appropriate channels for effective workers' voice as a minimum standard must be made. Funded organisations are asked to include a short joint statement on their website, highlighting their commitment to advancing the Fair Work First criteria, including the real Living Wage and effective voice conditions. Please see the Guidance as to what is required]

11.3 Funded organisations are also asked to demonstrate a commitment to Fair Work First practices through a variety of policies and practices. Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's policy for driving high quality and fair work, and workforce diversity across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work criteria to grants, other funding and public contracts being awarded by and across the public sector, where it is relevant to do so. Fair Working First practices include

- payment of at least the real Living Wage
- provide appropriate channels for effective workers' voice, such as trade union recognition
- investment in workforce development
- no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts
- action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace
- offer flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of employment and,
- oppose the use of fire and rehire practice. The Fair Work First criteria seek to address particular challenges in Scotland's labour market, to make a real difference to people and their communities, business and other organisations and the economy.

Council Standard Conditions of Grant

12 New conditions of grant provision

- 12.1 If there is a need to introduce new conditions of grant, the Council will make organisations aware, including the reasons for their introduction.

13 Special Conditions

Organisations must comply with the special conditions noted below:

- 13.1 If you are registered with the Care Inspectorate, you are required to inform the Council and/ or EHSCP as appropriate of any changes to your registration or inspection grades or where any restrictions or conditions have been attached to your provision.