

FEDERATION OF VILLAGE & COMMUNITY HALLS

GRANTS SCHEME GUIDANCE NOTES FOR FUNDING APPLICATION

Federations of Village & Community Halls operate a general grant support scheme for its member halls with funding received annually from Scottish Borders Council. In order to comply with government requirements for the proper distribution of public funds, the application form must be completed. *The Federation has to report to Scottish Borders Council via the **SCOTTISH BORDERS VILLAGE AND COMMUNITY HALLS** on the allocation of the grant and the information we ask for in the application form will make this possible.*

General conditions: This grant may be used towards annual insurance premiums and other running costs as well as small projects, emergency grants to keep buildings wind and water tight and for minor improvements, including support for better management of the Hall. Equipment purchased with this grant **MAY NOT** be disposed of within 5 years from the date of the award unless permission is given by the Federation.

Decisions are made by the unanimous agreement of at least 3 Federation Management Committee members. Funds are limited and the Committee will take into account the Hall's current financial situation and application history.

Please ensure you use the most up to date application form which can be obtained from your local Secretariat through Borders Community Action.

What we can fund:

Category A: Running/Core Costs

You can apply for help towards paying your annual insurance premium or other running costs of up to £500, but please ensure insurance costs are reviewed at least every 5 years. You must have less than £15,000 in unrestricted funds, this means funds that have not been earmarked for other projects – please provide clear explanation of the reserves on your application form.

This generally means that the free reserves will be less than the normal annual running costs of your hall after paying the expenditure for which the application is made, so it's money in cash or the bank which is not designated for specific work or other costs associated with maintaining and running your hall. If you have funds set aside to cover future expenditure such as decorating or replacement of furniture or a 'roof fund', this does not count as 'free'. The committee will take annual income and expenditure into account when making their decisions and, as we want Halls to get grants, we will be flexible within reason.

Category B: Emergencies

To prevent more damage or deterioration you can apply for an emergency grant to keep your hall wind and water tight. There is a maximum limit of £3000.

Category C: Improvements

You can apply to help fund minor improvements and additions to your building and facilities, buy equipment, furniture, fixtures and fittings which will be owned by the Hall. You can apply for up to £3000 but we would look for some match funding in this instance, sourced through fund raising or funding sourced elsewhere e.g. The National Lottery. We will also support Hall Committees by covering legal fees up to a maximum of £3000 for transferring the property if you change to a SCIO.

Category D: Encouraging best practice

The Federation may also introduce specific schemes to promote good practice, eg to fund Electrical Installation Checks, convertor for the electric generator, hearing loops, broadband or encourage financial and environmental sustainability, up to a maximum sum of £1000.

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Who we can fund

Halls or other Community Buildings which are members of their local Federation of Village and Community Halls. Scottish Borders Council has insisted that grants are given to Halls most in need. Their criteria, which we have had to adopt, defines 'need' as halls which have 'limited free cash reserves'.

What we cannot fund

We cannot fund consumable supplies, wages, projects related to someone running activities in the hall or projects where the work has been done or items bought prior to the grant decision.

Frequency of application

You can only make one application in each category per financial year.

Decisions on Grant

The committee will meet to assess applications at regular intervals and will make final decisions on behalf of the Federation. The committee may grant less than the total applied for. You may be asked for additional information about your application which will help the committee make an informed decision. The committee members welcome a representative to attend the meeting to give additional information and answer any questions if the figure applied for exceeds £1,000. Please add a note to your form if you would like to come to the meeting and you will be given a time. Applicants will be contacted within 2 weeks of the committee meeting which dealt with the application, giving the committee decision and the reason/s if not successful. Payment will be sent to successful halls within two weeks.

Conditions of Grant

Please check that the Secretariat has a copy of the Hall's latest constitution, Trust Deed or Memorandum and Articles of Association. With every application we need copies of information as follows:

- Two quotes for all items requesting funding if value is for over £1000.
- Latest Bank statements (all accounts)
- Accounts for year ended immediately prior to the application.

Note: If the application is within 3 months of your hall's year end the previous year's annual accounts and report are acceptable.

Subsequently, we also need proof that the grant has been spent on what was in the application. A copy of a receipted invoice or invoices for the work/items covered by the grant needs to be provided within 30 days of the payment of the last invoice. If the money has not all been spent within one year of the grant award, you should provide copy invoices for what has been spent and provide the reasons.

Contact Information

Completed forms should be sent to your Federation Secretariat at Borders Community Action. You can also contact Borders Community Action if you have any queries or would like some assistance with your application.

Email: info@borderscommunityaction.org.uk